

## **FAQS ON MYCOTOXIN - PATULIN**

### ***Q1 What is a mycotoxin***

Ans: It is any toxic substance naturally produced by moulds (fungi) that grow on a variety of different crops and foodstuffs including apples often under warm and humid conditions.

### ***Q.2: Are mycotoxins harmful***

Ans: Mycotoxins can cause adverse health effects to both humans and livestock ranging from acute poisoning to long-term effects such as immune deficiency and even cancer. Most are chemically stable and survive food processing

### ***Q.3: What is patulin***

Ans: Patulin is a type of mycotoxin that is found in damaged or mouldy fruits, particularly apples and apple products including juice. However, patulin has also been detected in pears, bananas, peaches, pineapple, blueberries, apricots, cherries, and grapes.

### ***Q 4: How does one get exposed to patulin?***

Ans: People get exposed to Patulin mainly through consuming food products contaminated with Patulin.

If contaminated apples are used to make juices, high levels of patulin are likely to be carried through to the final product.

### ***Q5: Will cutting away the mould/rot take away the patulin in the food?***

The amount of patulin in the juices can be reduced after removal of the rotten or damaged fruit but cannot be eliminated completely as the mycotoxin diffuses into the healthy parts of the fruit.

### ***Q6: Is patulin harmful?***

Ans: Yes, the ingestion of high levels of patulin could be harmful to the body. (what are high levels? Can we be a bit more specific or not?)

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**Q7: *What are the symptoms of patulin poisoning?***

Acute exposure to Patulin causes gastrointestinal symptoms including **vomiting, nausea, ulcers, intestinal hemorrhages, and lesions in the** duodenum. They can cause cancer and can produce physical or functional defects in the human embryo. It also has adverse effects that damage vital organs including liver and kidney

**Q8: *Which group of people are at higher risk of patulin.***

Ans: High levels of Patulin affect all races, genders and age groups. Yet, some categories are more sensitive when it comes to exposure to toxicants. For instance, the level of Patulin in apple-based foods for kids has been set to be five times lower than the acceptable level for adults, which indicates that children below the age of 12 are a group of population at higher risk as well as pregnant women.

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