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Fomes officinalis

AGARICUS is a fungus found on larch (*Larix*). Found in Europe from the Southern Tyrol and French Alps to Russia, it has a yellowish-spotted, brownish surface.

It is also known as Larch agaric, Purging agaric, and White agaric.

Warning – large doses can be purgative and can cause vomiting.

Officinalis means ‘of the shop (usually the apothecary’s or herbalist’s)’. Certain plants used for medicinal purposes, whether of actual or legendary value, were kept readily available and acquired this name.

Rarely used nowadays, this fungus was once a confectionery flavouring and contributed its bitter taste.

It was also an ingredient in a noted 17th Century medication known as ‘Warburg’s Fever Tincture ‘ and its primary medicinal use was in the treatment of fever and diarrhoea for which it may occasionally be prescribed today.