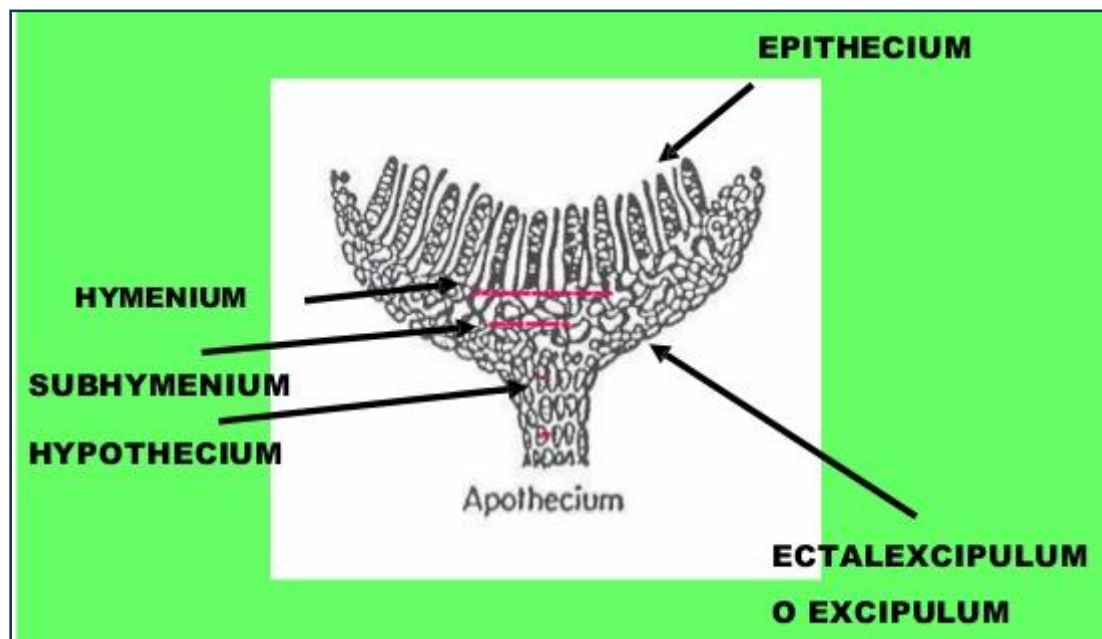
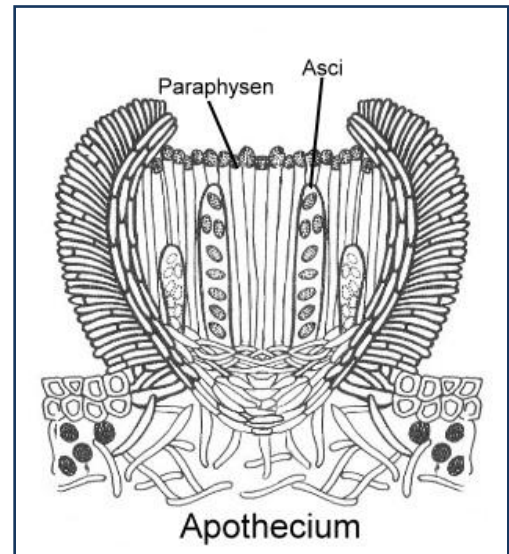
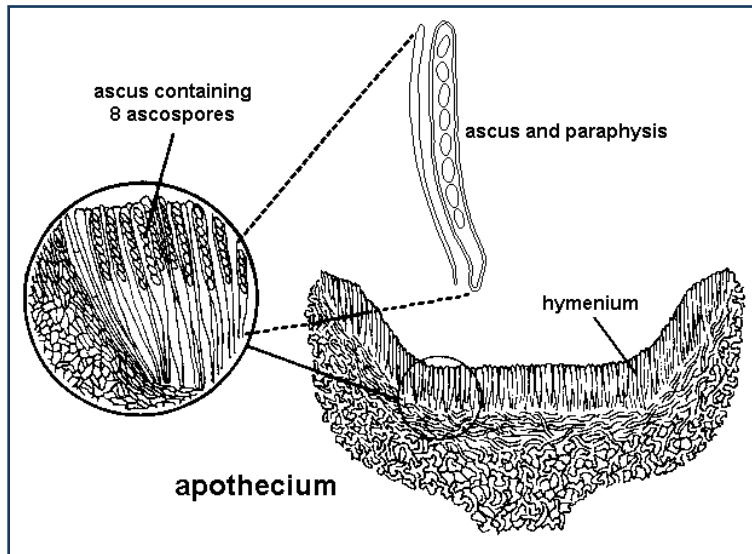


IV CLASS DISCOMYCETES

- The series Discomycetes is characterized by the formation of an ascocarp called an **apothecium**.
- Typically an apothecium is **cup-shaped** which is why Discomycetes are sometimes called "**cup fungi**".
- However, the shape of the apothecium is **quite variable**.
- Whatever their shape may be, the asci **form a hymenium** that is usually, entirely exposed at maturity.
- The **asci are unitunicate** and forcibly eject the ascospores.
- **Paraphyses** are generally present in apothecia.



Variations in Apothecium Configuration

1. *Sarcoscypha coccinea*, a typical cup-shaped apothecium



2. *Morchella esculenta*, a species in which the apothecium has now formed depressions that are fertile with sterile ridges in between.



3. *Leotia lubrica*, a species in which the "cup" of the apothecium is interpreted as being folded back, i.e. the hymenium is on top, giving it a mushroom-like appearance;



4. *Gyromitra californica*, a species in which the apothecium is said to be "saddle-shaped", and the interpretation here is similar to the previous species, but now the cup has been folded in half.

