

SEASONAL HEALTH ALERT

Questions: contact WAPC by emailing mryuk@wapc.org.

Mushroom Safety

Opportunities for gathering and consuming mushrooms in the Pacific Northwest are abundant, and many mushrooms are considered delicacies – but **some mushrooms are poisonous and can be deadly**. Before venturing out to mushroom forage, it's important to keep yourself safe by learning about mushroom safety. Here are some tips from the Washington Poison Center and Puget Sound Mycological Society:

THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY SAYS, IN ORDER TO BE EDIBLE, MUSHROOMS MUST BE:

1. **Identified with certainty** – there is no shortcut. The name of the mushroom must be known. *Even the experts get fooled.*
2. **Tolerated by most people** – a good field guide passes on the experience of people who have eaten a particular species.
3. **Found in a wholesome environment** – mushrooms can absorb herbicides and heavy metals. Where mushrooms are found is important to your overall health.
4. **Fresh** – rotten or damaged mushrooms are never edible.
5. **Cooked** – heat softens indigestible mushrooms. It may vaporize some poisons and reduce the potency in others.
6. **Eaten in reasonable quantities** – some mushrooms are safe to eat in small portions but troublesome when overeaten.
7. **Eaten by health adults** – children and seniors, and people already ill may be sickened by mushrooms enjoyed by others.



SYMPTOMS OF MUSHROOM POISONING INCLUDE

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- In severe cases, seizures, kidney and liver failure

If you, or another person, have ingested a poisonous mushroom and are experiencing difficulty breathing, face swelling, or loss of consciousness

CALL 911

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MUSHROOM IDENTIFICATION

- The Puget Sound Mycological Society offers the Hildegard Hendrickson Identification Clinic on Mondays, from 4 pm to 7 pm, Glass Atrium at the Center for Urban Horticulture, University of Washington, 3501 NE 41st Street (Mary Gates Drive), Seattle, WA 98105. Learn more at, www.psms.org.

The Washington Poison Center is always here to help, 24/7/365, by calling: 1 (800) 222-1222. All calls are free and confidential.