

# Death cap mushrooms

The death cap mushroom (*Amanita phalloides*) is a deadly poisonous fungus that is found across the Canberra region.

There have been multiple incidents and fatalities associated with death cap mushrooms in the ACT.

Death cap mushrooms can grow anywhere in our region, at any time. All parts of the death cap mushroom are poisonous. Eating even a small amount of a death cap mushroom can kill you. Death cap mushrooms remain potentially lethal, even if cooked.



- Do not touch or eat wild mushrooms.
- Talk to your family and friends about staying away from any wild mushrooms.
- Remind visitors and people new to the ACT that death cap mushrooms grow in Canberra.
- Keep children and pets away from wild mushrooms.

## Symptoms and medical treatment

If you think you may have eaten a death cap mushroom:

- Seek immediate medical attention at a hospital emergency department.
- Do not wait for symptoms to occur.
- The chances of survival increase when treatment is started early.
- Take any remaining mushroom to the hospital for identification.
  - Do this by placing any remaining mushroom in a sealed and labelled container.
  - Wash your hands and any equipment or tools which have come into contact with the mushroom.

Symptoms of death cap mushroom poisoning generally occur 6–24 hours or more after ingestion and include abdominal pains, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Symptoms may subside for 1–2 days giving a false impression of recovery. However, by this stage the toxin will have already caused serious liver damage. Liver failure and death may occur.

If poisoning is suspected, please attend a hospital emergency department. Further information and assistance can be sought by calling the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 (24 hours a day, seven days a week).

## If you think you have seen a death cap mushroom

It can be extremely difficult to distinguish death cap mushrooms from edible mushrooms, even for experienced collectors.

### If you think a death cap mushroom may be growing in a public area:

- Report it to Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

### If you find wild mushrooms at home:

- Keep children and pets away from them.
- Do not touch them with bare hands.
- Remove them using gloves or tools and place them in a plastic bag.
- Dispose of the bag with your household rubbish, ensuring it cannot be accessed by children or animals.
- Wash your hands and any tools used to help remove mushrooms.

### Remember:

- Do not touch or eat wild mushrooms.
- Remove wild mushrooms before mowing, as mowing over mushrooms can actually spread them further.
- Kicking or stomping on wild mushrooms will not eradicate them or eliminate the risk they pose to children or pets.
- Do not compost wild mushrooms.

## More information

For more information about death cap mushrooms, including flyers and posters in languages other than English, visit the [ACT Health website](#).

### Accessibility

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like an alternative format, please phone 13 22 81.



If English is not your first language and you need the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.  
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