

Poison Prevention

Newsletter

June 2021

UPSTATE
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210



To Eat or Not to Eat...Wild Mushrooms!

It will soon be mushroom season! From July through November in the northeast, mushrooms thrive in the wild. Sounds tasty to some but... foraging mushrooms could lead to a poisoning!

As there are often many different types of poisonous mushrooms in one region, the Upstate New York Poison Center reminds you to never eat mushrooms you find growing outside unless an expert forager has examined them. (Even then, errors are made.) According to The Audubon Society's Field Guide to North American Mushrooms, the most common poisonous mushrooms, and some of the most deadly, are of the genus, *Amanita*. Common names for poisonous mushrooms are, Panther Cap, Death Cap, and Destroying Angel.¹

Some poisonous mushrooms range from bright orange and shiny white to red with spotted caps. In most cases you can't tell if a mushroom is poisonous just by its color and shape. There are mushroom apps available but they are meant to act as a guide. As of yet, there is no app that can positively identify a mushroom through technology. The only definitive way to determine if a mushroom is poisonous is to examine it under a microscope². Remember, for those of you who think cooking mushrooms might remove the toxins, most toxins are not broken down by heat and are not made safer by cooking. Also, be careful not to select mushrooms on and around property that might have been sprayed with pesticides. There are many edible mushrooms but eating the

wrong one can make you very sick. The symptoms of mushroom poisoning can be immediate or can take hours to develop and can be severe.

The symptoms can include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. If symptoms occur, call the poison center immediately for help at 1-800-222-1222. If you are referred to an emergency room, it is recommended that you take any remaining mushrooms with you as they may help in the identification process. As a precaution, while in the field, take multiple pictures of the mushrooms you pick, including the stem, the underside and the cap, just in case you develop any symptoms after ingestion. When taking photos, place a coin next to the mushroom as a comparison in estimating the size of the mushroom.

Even experienced mushroom identification experts are cautious about consuming wild mushrooms because of the risk of being poisoned. Remember too, that children like to explore and touch things especially if they are brightly colored and within reach. Mushrooms found growing on the ground in forests or in wooded areas under pine and oak trees can be attractive. Therefore, it is important to keep children from even reaching for them. A good rule of thumb is to teach them to "always ask first" before touching, tasting or smelling anything.

It's worth repeating the warning to never eat a mushroom until you can positively identify it. Enjoy foraging... but remember to follow the rules for staying safe.

For more information on poisonous plants visit our website: <https://bit.ly/3xELNNS>

1. Retrieved 5/10/21

USDA Field Guide to Common Macrofungi in Eastern Forests and Their Ecosystem Functions:
https://www.fs.fed.us/nrs/ubs/gtr/gtr_nrs79.pdf

2. Retrieved 5/10/21

<https://www.chemistryworld.com/features/>

Cornell University's Poison Plant Database

With summer on its way, gardens, yards and parks will be brimming with flowering bushes, trees and plants. Be sure to keep the Cornell University's poisonous plants database in mind when looking for information before you choose to add a plant to your garden.

The website at <http://poisonousplants.ansci.cornell.edu/>

"...a growing reference that includes plant images, pictures of affected animals and presentations concerning the botany, chemistry, toxicology, diagnosis and prevention of poisoning of animals by plants and other natural flora (fungi, etc.)."

However, if someone comes in contact with the any through dermal, or ocular exposure or through ingestion don't waste time! Call the Upstate New York Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for help.



Upstate Medical University

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Keeping Safe in the Summer

From Backyard BBQs to Backpacking Adventures...

by Mary Beth Dryer, MS

Now that warmer temperatures have arrived, we will undoubtedly find ourselves enjoying the outdoors more often. Here are a few tips to keep our families safe while enjoying the warm weather.



Barbeques

- Wash your hands, work surfaces and cooking utensils before, during and after food preparation.
- Cook food to the recommended internal temperature, using a food thermometer to ensure that meat is cooked properly. Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood, unless the plate has been washed with soap and water. *(continued on page 4)*

Insect Stings & Tick Bites

- Be sure to wear shoes while outside. If hiking, wear long sleeves/pants, and proper footwear. Consider tucking shirts into pants and pants into socks, and choosing light colored clothing may help in detecting insects and ticks.
- Keep insect repellant and other first aid products up and out of reach of small children. *(continued on page 4)*



Berries, Mushrooms & Plants

- Never eat or touch an unknown berry, mushroom or plant. Although they may look harmless, it is never a good idea to eat them without being sure they are non-toxic. Teach children never to put them in their mouths without asking an adult. Unless you are an expert, avoid foraging for food since poisonous berries, mushrooms and plants may look very similar to edible varieties. *(continued on page 4)*

If you suspect you or someone else has been exposed to a poison hazard, call the Upstate NY Poison Center (1-800-222-1222) right away. Do not wait for symptoms. We are open 24/7/365. The call is free and confidential. You'll always reach a specialist in poison information.

View our Poisonous Plant brochure: <https://bit.ly/3f5onJ0>



Buyer Beware

by Gail Banach, MS, MEd

During stressful times, consumers often look for relief from anxiety, chronic pain or other ailments. Cannabis-related products have become a popular solution as an alternative to prescriptions, over the counter medications and even other drugs. One popular cannabinoid receiving attention these days is Delta-8.

Background

Prior to the 2018 Farm Act the Controlled Substance Act (CSA) did not differentiate between marijuana and hemp. Now according to the Farm Act, marijuana is defined as a cannabis plant with more than 0.3 percent Delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which is the chemical responsible for most of marijuana's effects on the body, including a euphoric high. Hemp is defined as a cannabis plant with less than 0.3 percent Delta-9 THC¹. Delta-8 is not named in the Farm Act 2018.

Delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol, (Delta-8 THC), although intoxicating, appears to be less potent than Delta-9². Delta-8 THC naturally exists in very small amounts in the hemp plant. Therefore, post-extraction from the hemp plant, the CBD hemp oil is synthesized into Delta-8 THC in a lab. The resulting product can then be added to everyday consumables, such as gummies, tinctures, topicals (to apply to the skin), disposal vapes and even skin patches.

Confusion around Delta-8

Hemp products as delineated in the 2018 Farm Act are legal in the US. All other cannabis products are classified by the CSA as Schedule I substances, similar to heroin and LSD, thought to have a high potential for abuse and no accepted medical treatment use. All Schedule I substances are illegal on a federal level, even though 34 states have legalized marijuana. Hemp Industry Daily reports that as of May 2021, 11 states have specifically banned Delta-8. Colorado was most recently added to that list.³

Additionally, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) is charged with protecting the public's health by assuring the safety and efficacy of food and dietary supplements in the U.S. CBD-infused products have been approved and are regulated by the FDA. To date, Delta-8 has not received pre-market approval as a food or dietary supplement.⁴

Despite all of this, Delta-8 products are being sold and in a variety of locations other than legal cannabis dispensaries, often found in gas stations, convenience stores, head shops and online. According to insiders, sales are brisk.⁵

(continued on page 4)

Barbeques

- When serving food do not leave food at room temperature for more than two (2) hours. Hot food needs to stay hot (in a crockpot or chaffing dish) and cold food needs to stay cold (in a cooler or ice bath).
- If using lighter fluid, tiki torch fluid, lamp oil, butane, etc. — use as directed, store properly, keep in original container and away from children.

Insect Stings & Tick Bites

- Avoid wearing scented soaps & perfumes. Be sure to use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved insect repellent that contains DEET. DEET is not recommended for use in infants less than 2 months of age.
- Walk in the center of trails and avoid bushy areas with tall grasses. Inspect gear, pets, children, and yourself for ticks/insects after spending time outside.

Berries, Mushrooms & Plants

- Be wary of poison ivy and poison oak. These can cause a severe rash following skin contact. Poison ivy usually grows as a vine in low shrubs and can produce flowers and even berries when the seasons change. Poison oak looks similar and can also grow in among other shrubs.
- Know the names of flowers and plants growing in and around your yard. Before venturing out, research the destination area and learn about the poisonous berries, mushrooms and plants you might encounter there.



Remember, if using any product that could be intoxicating:



There is a high risk for impairment - don't drive.



Be aware there could be an interaction with medications you may be using.



Don't leave the product within the reach of children.



Keep such products up, out of reach and sight.



Call the Upstate New York Poison Center if you feel you are having any unintended results. 1-800-222-1222



Unless regulations are put in place for Delta-8 products, with good manufacturing practices (GMP) and quality assurance...

Buyer beware!

Citations from Page 3. Retrieved 5/10/21

1. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46189>
2. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/beyond-cbd-here-come-the-other-cannabinoids-but-where-the-evidence-2021032322190>
3. <https://hempindustrydaily.com/colorado-bans-delta-8-thc-other-thc-isomers-derived-from-hemp/>
4. <https://www.newsweek.com/delta-thc-hemp-1583417>
5. <https://www.greenmarketreport.com/demand-is-booming-for-delta-8/>