



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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DISEASE CONTROL UNIT

Poisonous Wild Mushrooms

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For immediate release:

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Local Public Health Officials Warn Against Consumption of Wild Mushrooms

INCIDENT

- Santa Cruz County received the second report this year of a hospitalized person who became seriously ill after eating mushrooms collected in the La Selva Beach area.
- Both illnesses were probably due to the mushroom *Amanita phalloides*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Wild mushrooms should not be eaten unless they have been determined edible by a recognized mushroom expert.**
- **Individuals who develop any of these symptoms--abdominal pain, cramping, vomiting, and/or diarrhea after eating wild mushrooms should immediately contact the California Poison Control System at 1-800-8-POISON (1-800-876-4766) or 1-800-222-1222 and seek immediate medical attention.**

INFORMATION

- In past years, multiple hospitalizations, gastrointestinal illnesses and even deaths, have been caused by the consumption of wild mushrooms.
- The deaths have been linked to the *Amanita ocreata* mushroom, also known as the "destroying angel" and the *Amanita phalloides* mushroom, commonly called the "death cap" mushroom.
- Poisonous mushrooms are found throughout Santa Cruz County. The most common are:
 - Amanita phalloides*
 - Amanita ocreata*
 - Galerina autumnalis* (deadly)
- Eating poisonous mushrooms can cause abdominal pain, cramping, vomiting, diarrhea, liver damage resulting in the need for liver transplant, and death-- the symptoms usually occur 6 to 12 hours after ingestion. After gastrointestinal symptoms subside, liver damage may appear.
- Mushroom resources recommended by the Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz County are:
<http://www.fungusfed.org>, www.namyco.org and www.mykoweb.com.

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.