

# How can eating poisonous mushrooms cause death?

There are about 10,000 species of mushrooms but only a small fraction of them are poisonous. The danger is: not all poisonous mushrooms are recognizable by their bright colors.

Some poisonous mushrooms are visually difficult to distinguish from edible mushrooms. The advice to everyone is: only collect mushrooms that you know are safe.

The most dangerous fungi:

## Death cap mushroom *Amanita phalloides*



This death hat mushroom grows mainly in Europe and North America, but most of the poisoning cases around the world are caused by these death caps. Visually, they look like shiitake mushrooms. However, the poison of a medium-sized death cap mushroom is enough to kill an adult human. This death cap mushroom contains amanitin - a deadly poison that includes eight different poisons.

Fried, boiled, eaten raw, frozen, dried - no matter how processed, this deadly mushroom is dangerous.

Symptoms of poisoning appear 6-24 hours after eating mushrooms. Patients will experience sharp pain in the abdomen, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea. With timely medical support, the person suffering from poisoning has the ability to recover, but the consequences of kidney and liver damage are still lifelong.

## Red velvet mushroom (fly-killing mushroom or *Amanita muscaria*)



The dangerous poisons of the fly-killing fungus are ibotenic acid and muscimol, which directly affect the central nervous system.

Signs of mushroom poisoning that kill flies: delirium, mania, hallucinations, convulsions and a state similar to drunkenness. The first symptoms appear after half an hour and can last up to 4 hours.

## Brain fungus (*Gyromitra esculenta*)



Visually, this mushroom is very similar to the morel mushroom. It is especially dangerous when eaten raw, but after processing (fried, boiled), it is not only non-toxic but also very delicious.

Brain mushrooms contain gyromitrin. This substance will be converted in the stomach to methylhydrazine (rocket fuel) and is dangerous to the human body.

In case of poisoning, symptoms of nausea and vomiting will appear after 7-10 hours, and a little later, diarrhea and abdominal pain. If the poisoning is severe, people will die from liver damage.

## **Mushroom *Galerina marginata***



The mushroom *Galerina marginata*, also known as the autumn skull, is extremely poisonous. On the surface, these mushrooms resemble stump mushrooms (*armillaria mellea*) - which grow on stumps and trunks all over the world. *Galerina marginata* mushrooms contain amanitin like the death cap mushroom.

## **Squid mushroom (*Coprinus atramentarius*)**



The fungus itself is harmless, but when combined with alcohol, it becomes very dangerous. At that time, the coprin and amino acids contained in the squid will react with the alcohol and cause toxicity 48 hours after the meal. Manifestations of this type of poisoning are congested facial skin, cold hands and feet.

## **Webcap or veil mushroom (*Cortinarius rubellus*)**



Mushroom pickers often confuse webcap mushrooms with chanterelles mushrooms. This mushroom is extremely poisonous, just eating a small amount is enough to cause death. If they are lucky to escape death, the poisoned person must go on dialysis for life or have a kidney transplant. Webcap mushrooms contain orellanine, a very powerful toxin that has no effective antidote so far.

## **Erectile Dysfunction (*Claviceps purpurea*)**



Erectile dysfunction grows on rye and related cereal and forage crops. Consumption of cereals or nuts contaminated with the survival structure of this fungus can cause mycosis in humans and other mammals.

The mycelium grows deep into the young barley, destroying the cells of the host tissue and covering the inflorescence with a soft, white cottony mycelium. The mass of mycelium develops into a stiff spur-like nodule and turns gray-brown or purple-black.



This nodule contains alkaloids such as ergotamine, ergotamine, and ergocornine that have vasoconstrictor effects on smooth and uterine muscles. In low doses, ergot extract is prepared into many psychoactive and cardiovascular drugs. In high doses, ergot is very toxic, can cause gangrene in the fingertips and feet, muscle stiffness, and delirium. If people consume barley flour infected with ergot fungus, people will get ergot disease with muscle cramps in the limbs, jaw paralysis, and then rot and death. Cattle that eat grasses of the herbaceous family infected with ergots are also poisoned to death. Poisoning manifests through the following symptoms: convulsions, spasms, diarrhea, hallucinations and gangrene.

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