

The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System — Serving New Jersey Since 1983

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contacts:

800-222-1222 (800-962-1253 outside NJ)

Morris County Woman Poisoned After Eating Wild Mushrooms

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New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES)

Available for Interviews

(Newark, NJ) – October 29, 2015 — Poison experts warn - Never eat wild mushrooms either those growing on your lawns or in the wild!

This week, a 59 year old female called the NJ Poison Experts for help when she developed symptoms (nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea) after eating five (5) mushrooms she picked from her yard. The poison center's medical experts recommended she be seen immediately at a local hospital's emergency department because her symptoms could possibly be the early signs of mushroom toxicity, which can be life-threatening. Once in the emergency department, toxicologists from the NJ Poison Center in consultation with her treating physicians and a toxicologist at that hospital started medical care for a mushroom poisoning. This included the use of an experimental therapy in an attempt to prevent liver failure and death.

Many edible mushrooms have toxic "look-a-likes." Eating even a few bites of certain mushrooms can cause severe illness. Some symptoms of mushroom poisoning include intense vomiting and diarrhea, and damage to vital organs like the liver and even death.

There is no way a lay person can tell the difference between poisonous and harmless mushrooms. Even experienced mushroom pickers can be fooled at times, so this warning needs to be taken seriously **"do not eat wild mushrooms growing on your lawns or in the wild!"** To make matters worse, poisonous and non-poisonous mushrooms can grow side by side, making for the "perfect storm." Even those who claim to have been picking mushrooms safely for years need to remember that; **"THERE ARE OLD MUSHROOM PICKERS AND BOLD MUSHROOM PICKERS, BUT THERE ARE NO OLD, BOLD MUSHROOM PICKERS!"**

Parents need to heed the warning and teach their children to never put wild plants, berries, nuts, or mushrooms into their mouths. Keep in mind your family pets are highly susceptible to mushroom poisoning as well.

If an exposure should occur, do not take chances by waiting until symptoms appear or wasting valuable time looking up information on the Internet. Calling the poison center is always the fastest way to get the professional help or information you need in potential poisoning cases. Remove any remaining parts of the mushroom from the victim's mouth and place those fragments and all mushrooms that are in the immediate vicinity of the incident into one or more paper bags (NOT plastic!). The poison center will arrange for an expert to identify the mushroom and the center can then provide advice on management depending on the mushroom's identification. A digital photograph should be taken of the mushroom(s) in question. It helps to take a picture of the mushroom next to other objects such as a coin, ruler, etc. to provide a sense of scale.

If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 911 immediately, otherwise call the **NJ Poison Experts at 1-800-222-1222**. Having a poison expert give you exact instructions for your specific situation can help significantly during those critical first few minutes.

Time is of the essence in such situations so program your cell phone with the Poison Help number (800-222-1222) and post it somewhere in your house, like on your refrigerator or near your home phone. Help is available to NJ residents anytime day or night, even on weekends and holidays. Remember, services are fast, free, confidential, and multilingual. Call 800-222-1222, chat www.njpies.org, or text 8002221222@njpies.org; the hearing impaired may also use their TTY and call 973-926-8008.

Help is Just a Phone Call Away!

We are social. Join us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/njpies) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](https://twitter.com/NJPoisonCenter)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc. Stay tuned for more poison prevention week safety information.

Real People. Real Answers.

About NJPIES

As New Jersey's only poison control center, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System provides information on poison prevention and treatments. Chartered in 1983, NJPIES provides free consultation through telephone hot line services and the Web. Medical professionals such as physicians, registered nurses and pharmacists offer confidential advice regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention, drugs, food poisoning, animal bites and more. These specialists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

NJPIES coordinates state poison education and research and is designated as the regional poison center by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the American Association of Poison Control Centers. It tracks incidences of adverse reactions to food, drugs and vaccines in order to monitor potential public health issues and provide data to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A division of the Department of Emergency Medicine of the New Jersey Medical School of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located on the school's Newark campus. NJPIES is funded, in part, by the NJ Department of Health and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

New Jersey residents seeking immediate information about treating poison emergencies, and those with any drug information questions, should call the toll-free hot line, **800-222-1222**, any time. The hearing impaired may call **973-926-8008**. For more information, visit www.njpies.org or call **973-972-9280**.

About Rutgers

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation's premier public research universities. Serving more than 65,000 students on campuses, centers, institutes and other locations throughout the state, Rutgers is the only public university in New Jersey that is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is the health care education, research, and clinical division of Rutgers University, comprising nine schools and their attendant faculty practices, centers, institutes and clinics; New Jersey's leading comprehensive cancer care center; and New Jersey's largest behavioral health care network.

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