**Issue and background**

All school staff and students should be aware of the dangers of wild mushrooms.

This advice follows the [health alert](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/media-releases/poisonous-mushrooms-warning-issued-for-victoria) issued by the Victorian Department of Health Chief Health Officer on Wednesday 12 April 2023 about the danger of consuming potentially poisonous mushrooms, particularly death cap mushrooms and yellow staining mushrooms. These mushrooms commonly grow in both metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. You can view images of the 2 poisonous mushrooms on the Better Health Channel's [Mushroom poisoning](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/fungi-poisoning) webpage.

The toxin in death cap mushrooms remains even after cooking, peeling or drying. If ingested, poisoning can cause nausea, stomach cramps and/or long-term liver damage resulting in death.

Yellow staining mushrooms look similar to field mushrooms commonly found in supermarkets but can be harmful if consumed. Symptoms experienced after consumption include nausea, stomach cramps, vomiting, and diarrhoea. The severity of symptoms varies with the amount eaten.

**Immediate action required**

All schools are asked to regularly inspect their grounds for mushroom growth during Autumn.

Please let your students know about the dangers of these mushrooms and reinforce to them not to touch any mushrooms they find. School staff should:

* while wearing gloves, pick and remove any mushrooms growing
* carefully place mushrooms and used gloves in a bag and dispose of them in a closed rubbish bin
* wash hands thoroughly.

If you suspect mushroom poisoning, phone Triple Zero (000) or the Victorian Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26(24 hours, 7 days a week). Do not wait for symptoms to occur before seeking medical attention.

Please carefully collect any remaining mushrooms for identification, using the same safety steps as noted above.

If poisoning has occurred and emergency services have attended the school, the principal (or delegate) must contact the Incident Support and Operations Centre by phone (1800 126 126) to report 'High' or 'Extreme' severity incidents.

**Ongoing Action**

Monitor school grounds for mushroom growth.

If mushrooms are found on school grounds, submit a hazard report directly to [eduSafe Plus.](https://services.educationapps.vic.gov.au/edusafeplus)

If you have any issues or wish to discuss, contact the Department’s OHS Advisory Service via phone: 1300 074 715 or via email: safety@edumail.vic.gov.au.

For more information, refer to [Mushroom poisoning – Better Health Channel](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/fungi-poisoning).