FACT SHEET: WILD MUSHROOMS
MOREL MUSHROOMS

Fruiting for morel mushrooms begins in mid-April and lasts until mid-June. Morel hunting season in Michigan starts in May.

Wild mushrooms, including false morels, can be poisonous. Always seek advice and education from experts before preparing and eating wild mushrooms.

TRUE MORELS (EDIBLE)
- True morels are edible, but may be poisonous if prepared and consumed incorrectly.
- Consuming large quantities, eating raw or undercooked, or consuming with alcohol can cause toxicity.
- Common symptoms related to poisoning from true morel mushrooms include nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pain lasting less than 24 hours.

FALSE MORELS (NON-EDIBLE)
- NEVER eat false morel mushrooms or any unidentified species of mushroom.
- False morels contain the toxic gyromitrin.
- On-set of symptoms is typically 6-24 hours after consuming.
- Symptoms of poisoning include:
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting
  - Abdominal pain
  - Headache
  - Muscle cramps
  - Bluising
  - Fatigue

IF UNINTENDED CAN LEAD TO:
- Confusion
- Severe abdominal pain
- Hepatitis
- Jaundice
- Bleeding & blood loss

IDENTIFICATION

TRUE MOREL
- Cap:
  - More uniform shape
  - Pitted inward
  - Plits and ridges
  - Attached to the stem
- Interior:
  - Hollow

FALSE MOREL
- Cap:
  - Irregular shape
  - Outward bulges
  - More wavy and lobed
  - Cap not attached to stem at the base
- Interior:
  - Not hollow, filled with white fibers

EXPOSURE PREVENTION
- Every year, individuals become ill from eating mushrooms obtained during amateur mushroom hunts.
- NEVER eat a wild morel mushroom or any other species of wild mushroom without speaking to an expert first.
- Contact the Michigan Mushroom Hunters at michiganmushroomhunters.org to seek advice and to participate in expert-guided hunts.
- Specialists with your Michigan Poison Center can help with questions about mushrooms as well.
- When needed, our specialists will contact mycologists who study mushrooms and other fungi.

EXPOSURE
If anyone eats a wild, unidentified mushroom do the following:
- Take a picture of the mushroom if any is left, or another of the same, intact mushroom.
- Put remains or another intact mushroom in a paper bag.
- Label paper bag “DO NOT EAT” and place in the refrigerator.
- If no symptoms have developed after 24 hours, throw out the mushroom.
- If any symptoms develop within 24 hours of consuming an unknown mushroom seek emergency medical care immediately and bring the bagged mushroom with you to the emergency room.

MICHIGAN POISON CENTER
FREE, FAST, CONFIDENTIAL, EXPERT ADVICE
24 / 7 / 365
1-800-222-1222
Visit Midwestmycology.org
to learn more about morel foraging in Michigan

WWW.MIPOISONHELP.ORG