

Beware of Mushroom Poisoning in Pets



You may have heard or read on social media that we've unfortunately lost Bentley, a five-month-old member of our [Just Around the Corner](#) family, after he ate a toxic mushroom in his parents' yard. This is a very difficult announcement, but we want to let you know how dangerous mushrooms in your yard can be. There are just no words to express how deeply sad we are and how we wish we could make his mom and dad feel better. We send our deepest thoughts and prayers to Bentley's mom and dad.

Bentley played in his yard and took everything in the mouth, as all puppies do. He grabbed a mushroom in the yard and swallowed it before his dad could get it away. By the next day, he became very ill. He spent over a week in ICU at C CVS and sadly passed away soon afterwards.

Despite the nearly year-round (except wintertime) occurrence of mushroom poisoning in most of North America, it is probably underestimated, so it's wise for all of us to be vigilant. Don't let yet another tragedy happen to you.

We had an overwhelming response to our Facebook post and requests for more information. Therefore, we have done our research, and the result is this blog post.

Types of toxic mushrooms and symptoms of mushroom poisoning

Clinical signs of poisoning depend on the species of mushroom, the type of toxin in the mushroom,

and the pet's susceptibility.

Amanita, the most dangerous type, is attractive to dogs, particularly *A. phalloides* (death cap or death angel), *A. muscaria* (fly agaric), and *A. pantherina* (panther cap), probably because of the fishy odor. The ingestion of *A. phalloides* and other genera, including *Galerina* and *Lepiota* (false parasol), results in a series of phases: gastroenteritis, false recovery, and liver failure. Muscimol and ibotenic acid, the psychoactive toxins in toadstools (*A. muscaria* and *A. pantherina*), cause visual distortion and extreme sedation, among many signs.

Inocybe and *Clitocybe* produce muscarinic effects known as SLUD—salivation, lacrimation (excessive tear production), urination, and diarrhea.

Gyromitra spp. (false morels) generally cause vomiting and diarrhea. Most cases are mild, but seizures have been reported on rare occasions.

Hallucinogenic mushrooms such as *Psilocybe* (magic mushrooms, blue legs, or liberty caps), *Panaeolus*, *Copelandia*, *Gymnopilus*, *Pluteus*, and *Conocybe* cause disorientation, visual hallucinations, imaginary biting, hypertension, hyperthermia, seizures, and tremors, to name a few.

[ASPCA provides more detailed information](#) on the types of toxic mushrooms, mechanisms of toxicity, and treatment methods.

How to prevent mushroom poisoning

Keep an eye on your pets while taking them on a walk. Use [these pointers on identifying and finding mushrooms](#) to steer clear of areas where mushrooms grow.

It is difficult or even near impossible, even for mycologists (fungus experts), to distinguish toxic mushrooms from the edible varieties. Adding to the complexity are the varying colors, shapes, and levels of toxicity in many species. That said, don't take chances. Check your yard for mushrooms and remove them. When in doubt, pull them out! Soil aeration, fertilization, disposal of pet waste and rotting mulch, and grinding old tree stumps are some of the [ways to keep mushrooms at bay](#). Also [use these tips for mushroom identification and management](#).

What to do after mushroom consumption

Although 99 percent of mushrooms are low-toxin or nontoxic, always assume that all mushrooms are potentially dangerous. Collect a sample of the mushroom, vomitus, or feces to bring with you to the animal clinic. Use a paper towel, waxed paper, or a paper bag for the mushroom. Do not use plastic material. Refrigerate the sample until you are ready to have it examined.

Take your pet to the vet for decontamination, in which vomiting is induced to remove the mushroom. In cases of actual poisoning, activated charcoal is administered to flush remaining toxins, followed by supportive care.

Contact the North American Mycological Association (NAMA) to identify and document the suspected mushroom. [NAMA has a directory of identifiers](#) across North America. There is also a listing for identifiers in Massachusetts.

Resources and further reading

[Are Mushrooms Poisonous to Dogs?](#)

[Avoid Tragedy: Check Your Yard for These Potentially Fatal Growths](#)

[Dogs and Mushrooms: Are They Poisonous?](#)

[Mushroom Poisoning in Dogs and Cats](#)

[Mushrooms Poisonous to Pets](#)

[6 Poisonous Mushrooms That Are Toxic to Dogs](#)