

FACT SHEET – *Botulism*

BOTULISM SICKNESS IS CAUSED BY A POISON

- The poison is made by a type of bacteria.
 - The bacteria live in the soil. It grows best where there is little or no air.
 - It forms spores that can live a long time.
 - People cannot smell or taste the poison.
- Adults can get botulism poisoning
 - by eating foods containing the poison, like improperly home-canned food
 - by getting the bacteria in a wound
- Babies can get poisoned from eating food with the spores.
 - The spores grow in the body and make the poison.
 - Babies less than a year old should not eat honey or other natural syrups.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Frankfort, KY

<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/preparedness>

Kentucky Regional Poison Center
Louisville, KY

EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222

<http://www.krpc.com>

Lake Cumberland District Health Dept.
(606) 678 – 4761

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA

Toll free: 1-800-311-3435

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/botulism>

BOTULISM POISONING IS AN EMERGENCY

- People can die from botulism poisoning.
- This usually happens because they cannot breathe.
- Some signs of botulism poisoning in **adults** are double vision or blurred vision, difficulty speaking or swallowing, and paralysis—being unable to move arms or legs.
- **Babies** with botulism have a weak cry and are limp, seem tired, don't eat well, and are constipated.

ONLY A DOCTOR CAN TEST TO BE SURE IF SOMEONE HAS BOTULISM

FACT SHEET – *Botulism (continued)*

BOTULISM CAN BE PREVENTED

- Handle food carefully.
 - Can foods at home safely.
 - Get information on safe canning from the county extension service or U.S. Department of Agriculture.
 - Don't eat food from jars or cans if the container is bulging, the food is the wrong color, or the food tastes bad.
 - Refrigerate oils that have garlic or herbs.
 - Remove the foil from baked potatoes before putting them in the refrigerator.
- Take care of cuts and other wounds.
 - Clean all wounds.
 - See your doctor if an injury gets infected.

DON'T FEED HONEY TO BABIES UNDER A YEAR OLD