



CONTENTS

Botulism	1
Get to know FCS	3

BOTULISM

Botulism is a rare yet severe, potentially fatal disease caused by toxins released by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. These toxins are released into improperly processed food in which the bacteria or the spores of *Clostridium botulinum* are able to survive and grow. Botulinum toxins are neurotoxic (affecting the nervous system) and are one of the most lethal substances known to man, needing as little as 70 micrograms to kill a 70 kg person.

Spores produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum* are heat resistant and exist widely in the environment. In the absence of oxygen (inside canned products, etc.) these spores germinate and grow, thereby excreting toxins.

Summary:

-  Treatable by a medical professional
-  Spreads through contaminated food or water
-  Requires a medical diagnosis
-  Lab tests or imaging often required
-  Short-term: resolves within days to weeks

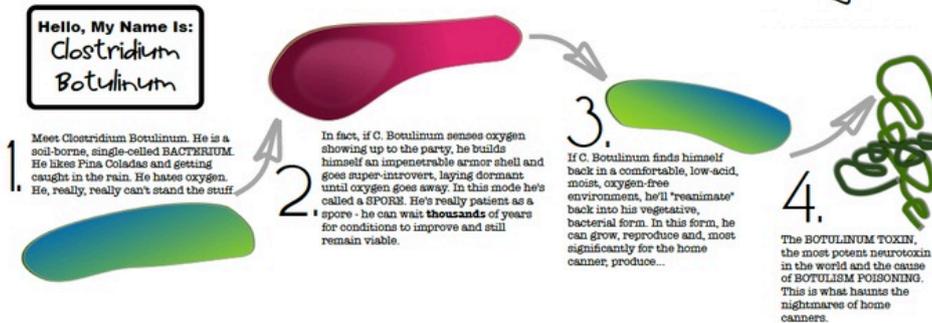
Symptoms:

Botulism toxins are neurotoxic and therefore affect the nervous system and the disease is characterised by descending paralysis that can cause respiratory failure. The symptoms are caused by the toxin produced by the bacterium and not the bacterium itself and usually appear 12-36 hours after exposure.

Early symptoms include fatigue, weakness and vertigo, followed by blurred vision, dry mouth and difficulty swallowing and speaking. Other symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea and abdominal swelling. The disease can eventually progress to weakness in arms, followed by the muscles in the respiratory system and lower limbs.

How Not To Die From Botulism

what home canners need to know about the world's most deadly toxin



Prevention

Prevention of food borne botulism is based on good practise during food preparation, especially during heating and sterilisation.

The WHO Five Keys to Safer Food can serve as the basis for education of food handlers and consumers.



Outbreak:

2017

The most recent recorded outbreak occurred on the 8th of May whereby 5 people were hospitalised after being diagnosed with botulism. The outbreak is said to be linked to nacho cheese sauce

2002

The first documented outbreak in Southern Africa occurred in South Africa in 2002. Two children aged 8 and 12, developed acute flaccid paralysis and this proved fatal.

GET TO KNOW FCS



NAME: Wendy McKellar

POSITION AT FCS: Secretary

COUNTRY OF BIRTH: South Africa

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION: Matric

FAVOURITE NON WORK ACTIVITY: Playing sport, socialising

FAVOURITE MUSIC/MUSICIAN/GROUP/BAND: All sorts

THE COUNTRY YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THE MOST: Italy



NAME: Alet Butler

POSITION AT FCS: Debtors

COUNTRY OF BIRTH: South Africa

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION: BCom II

FAVOURITE NON WORK ACTIVITY: Hiking, reading

FAVOURITE MUSIC/MUSICIAN/GROUP/BAND: Beethoven and Rock and Roll

THE COUNTRY YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THE MOST: Italy and France.

Accreditation and affiliations

FCS received ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation through SANAS in August 2001. Being an accredited laboratory means that we not only have the confidence in our personnel, our quality of testing and the test results we provide to our clients, but also that we are competent in our duties and that our clients and other laboratories can have confidence in the services we render. Our testing methods are assessed on the same principles as other accredited laboratories throughout the world.