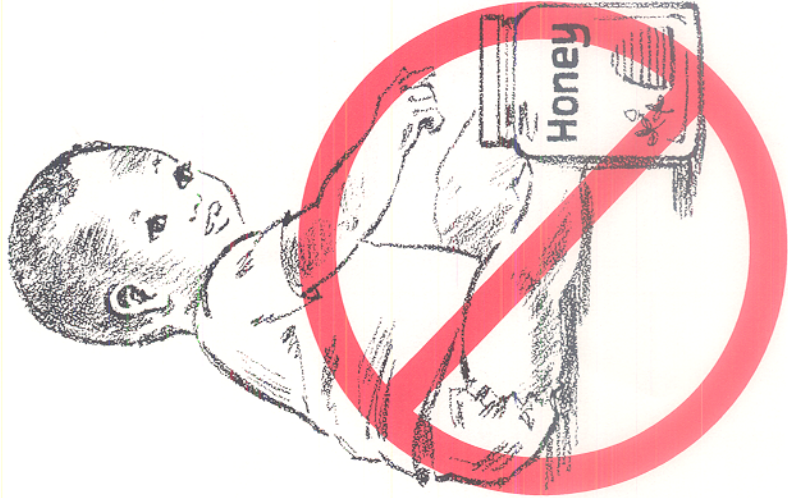


# No Honey



## During Your Baby's First Year

**Infant botulism** is a very serious disease. It affects the baby's nerves and muscles. A baby who has this disease may be weak, constipated, and eat poorly. In extreme cases, the baby may not be able to move, may stop breathing, and may die.



### Warning

**Do Not** add honey to baby's food, water, or formula.



**Do Not** dip your baby's pacifier in honey.



**Do Not** give your baby honey as if it were medicine.

However, a baby can still get infant botulism even if he or she has not been fed honey.

Honey can cause this disease because it often contains the spores of harmful bacteria. These bacteria can grow in the infant's intestine. The growth makes a strong poison.

**Honey is safe for persons over one year old\***

After one year of age, babies, children and adults no longer get sick from this disease. The bacteria cannot grow and make poison after the first year of life.

\* Except perhaps for some people who have had intestinal surgery or inflammatory bowel disease (see refs. 4 and 6.)

## Honey Can Cause Infant Botulism— A Serious Disease For Babies

**These are reasons  
to call the doctor:**



- If your baby is too weak to cry or suck as usual
- If your baby does not want to eat or cannot swallow
- If your baby has weak arms and legs
- If your baby has a wobbly head because the neck is weak
- If your baby does not move his or her bowels and has weak muscles

### **Infant botulism is very serious**

If your baby develops this disease, she or he may need to be treated in a hospital for days or weeks. But almost all babies with this disease recover fully.

### **And please note:**

It is possible that raw fruits and vegetables also contain botulism spores.

To be safe, follow the advice of the American Academy of Pediatrics:

**Feed only breast milk (or iron-fortified formula) for the first year of life. Supplemental solid foods may be introduced at 4 to 6 months of age.**



### **Information for the doctor**

1. Arnon SS et al. Honey and other environmental risk factors for infant botulism. *J Pediatr* 1979; 94: 331-36.
2. Midura TF et al. Isolation of *Clostridium botulinum* from honey. *J Clin Microbio* 1979; 9: 282-83.
3. Johnson RO et al. Diagnosis and management of infant botulism. *Am J Dis Child* 1979; 586-593.
4. Bartlett JC. Infant botulism in adults. *N Engl J Med* 1986; 315: 254-55.
5. Arnon SS. Infant botulism: anticipating the second decade. *J Infect Dis* 1986; 154: 201-206.
6. Arnon SS. Infant botulism. pp. 1095-1102 in Feigen RD, Cherry JD, eds. *Textbook of Pediatric Infectious Diseases*, 3rd ed. 1992, WB Saunders, Philadelphia.

*The brochure was prepared by the Infant Botulism Prevention Program of the California Department of Health Services and has been endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics.*

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Infant Botulism Treatment and Prevention Program  
Division of Communicable Disease Control  
850 Marina Bay Parkway, Richmond, CA 94804

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor  
State of California

4/04