

Health Alert: Infant Botulism

Georgia Department of Public Health Requests Reports of Suspect Infant Botulism Cases

ACTION STEPS

Local health departments: *Please forward to hospitals and clinics in your jurisdiction.*

Hospitals and clinics: *Please distribute to infectious disease doctors, infection preventionists, emergency department physicians, intensive care physicians, neurologists, primary care providers, and pediatricians.*

SUMMARY

The CDC, FDA, and Infant Botulism Treatment and Prevention Program (IBTPP) at the California Department of Public Health and multiple state health departments are investigating 13 reported cases of infant botulism associated with ByHeart Whole Nutrition Infant Formula. At this time, two specific lots have been voluntarily recalled, but other lots may be impacted. Infant botulism occurs when infants ingest spores of *Clostridium botulinum* (or related species). Toxin production occurs in the intestine, producing symptoms. No reports of infant botulism have been received by the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) as of November 10, 2025. However, DPH urges healthcare providers to maintain heightened awareness for patients with compatible symptoms and recent ByHeart formula ingestion from any lot. Providers should also gather lot information as a part of their follow-up, where possible. This is a rapidly changing situation and the information provided is up to date as of November 10, 2025.

CLINICAL PRESENTATION

Patients with infant botulism may present with one or more of the following symptoms: poor feeding, constipation, difficulty swallowing, respiratory difficulties, weak or altered cry, ptosis, sluggish pupils, blunted facial expression. Symptoms may progress to flaccid paralysis if treatment is not initiated.

If you suspect your infant patient has botulism, immediately call 510-231-7600 for consultation with the on-call physician at the IBTPP at the California Department of Public Health. This service is available 24/7 and the physician will provide a no-cost clinical consultation and release BabyBIG treatment if the patient's clinical findings indicate infant botulism. BabyBIG®, or Botulism Immune Globulin Intravenous, can only be obtained through clinical consultation with IBTPP.

REPORTING

Infant botulism is a notifiable disease, and suspect cases should be reported to DPH immediately (O.C.G.A. §31-12-2). Call your [District Health Office](#) or the DPH Acute Disease Epidemiology Section at 404-657-2588 during business hours Monday through Friday, or 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584) after-hours on evenings and weekends. Do not await laboratory results before reporting. Clinical consultation as described above may be pursued before reporting the case to DPH.

LABORATORY TESTING

Clinical laboratory testing is performed at CDC; however, specimen submission should be coordinated by DPH Acute Disease Epidemiology for submission through the Georgia Public Health Laboratory (GPHL) to CDC after approval by the GPHL Laboratory Director.

Additional details can be provided by DPH and found on CDC's website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/laboratory/specimen-submission/detail.html?CDCTestCode=CDC-10132>

In the context of a confirmed case, product testing may be discussed on a case-by-case basis but clinical testing is the priority.

ACTIONS REQUESTED FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS:

- Consider infant botulism in patients with consistent symptoms, including but **not** limited to reported exposures to recalled product and seek clinical consultation as described under "Clinical Presentation"
- If IBTPP consulting physician endorses infant botulism as a possible diagnosis and recommends treatment, obtain a stool sample to be held refrigerated. Do not use glycerin suppositories but rather use non-bacteriostatic water for an enema if necessary. DPH will coordinate submission to CDC with hospital laboratories. More collection guidance can be found here: <https://www.infantbotulism.org/laboratorian/collection.php>
- Report suspected cases of infant botulism **IMMEDIATELY** by calling your [District Health Office](#) or the DPH Acute Disease Epidemiology Section at 404-657-2588 during business hours Monday through Friday, or 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584) after-hours on evenings and weekends. You do not need to report infants for which IBTPP consult indicates infant botulism is NOT suspected.
- Do not accept or submit infant formula samples from patients, any testing of these will be coordinated by public health. You should advise parents or guardians to retain unused product portions at home in a manner that would not risk further use. If the product has already been discarded, please have them retain the container and make note of the lot number on the bottom of the container, if it is still available. Advise parents or guardians to keep any receipts or invoices. Although two specific lots have been recalled (206VABP/251261P2 and 206VABP/251131P2), it's important to identify any additional lots which may be associated with suspect cases. Pictures of where to find the lot number can be found on FDA's website: <https://www.fda.gov/food/outbreaks-foodborne-illness/outbreak-investigation-infant-botulism-infant-formula-november-2025#images>
- Review CDC and FDA websites for additional information and updates:
<https://www.cdc.gov/botulism/outbreaks-investigations/infant-formula-nov-2025/investigation.html>
<https://www.fda.gov/food/outbreaks-foodborne-illness/outbreak-investigation-infant-botulism-infant-formula-november-2025>

CONTACT INFORMATION

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