

# Botulism

(*Clostridium botulinum*)

## Clinical criteria

Any person with at least one of the following clinical forms:

### *Food-borne and wound botulism*

At least one of the following two:

- Bilateral cranial nerve impairment (e.g. diplopia, blurred vision, dysphagia, bulbar weakness)
- Peripheral symmetric paralysis

### *Infant botulism*

Any infant with at least one of the following six:

- Constipation
- Lethargy
- Poor feeding
- Ptosis
- Dysphagia
- General muscle weakness

The type of botulism usually encountered in infants (< 12 months of age) can affect children also over 12 months of age and occasionally adults, with altered gastrointestinal anatomy and microflora.

## Laboratory criteria

At least one of the following two:

- Isolation of *C. botulinum* or other *Clostridium* species known to be pathogenic for infant botulism (stool) or wound botulism (wound) (isolation of *C. botulinum* in stool of adults not relevant for the diagnosis of food-borne botulism)
- Detection of botulinum toxin in a clinical specimen

## Epidemiological criteria

An epidemiological link by exposure to a common source

## Case classification

### A. Possible case

NA

### B. Probable case

Any person meeting the clinical criteria and with an epidemiological link

### C. Confirmed case

Any person meeting the clinical and the laboratory criteria