

Honey Can Cause Infant Botulism - A Serious Disease for Babies

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 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.

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

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.

These are reasons to phone 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 may also contain the botulism spores. To be safe, follow the advice of the American Academy of Pediatrics:

Feed only breast milk (or formula) for the first four to six months of life.