

NOTIFIABLE MEDICAL CONDITIONS (NMC) CASE DEFINITIONS FLIPCHART

Category 1: Immediate reporting telephonically followed by written or electronic notification within 24hrs of diagnosing a case

BOTULISM

Why is surveillance necessary?	Who must notify and when?	Suspected case definition	Probable case definition	Confirmed case definition
<p>Botulism is a rare but serious paralytic illness caused by a nerve toxin that is produced by the bacterium <i>Clostridium botulinum</i>. Botulism may be foodborne (18 to 36 hours after eating a contaminated food, or associated with contaminated wounds. Injection-drug users and infants are groups more at risk for botulism.</p> <p>Surveillance and rapid notification will allow for early identification of contaminated foodstuffs and prevention of other cases in the case of foodborne disease.</p>	<p>The health care worker who suspects botulism should notify the case as soon as possible</p>	<p>A person who presents with rapidly progressive (usually descending) symmetric muscle weakness, with any of double vision, blurred vision, bulbar paralysis or weakness, ptosis, slurred speech AND having relevant epidemiological exposure (ingestion of foods contaminated with botulinum toxin or <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> contaminated wound with in situ toxin production).</p>	<p>A person with clinically compatible illness with an epidemiologic link to other suspected/confirmed cases or food</p>	<p>A confirmed case is a person with laboratory evidence of <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> infection by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture isolation of <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> from clinical specimens, wound or suspected food; <p>OR</p> <p>Detection of <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> toxin in clinical specimens or suspected food.</p>
<p>Additional notes</p> <p>Clinicians who suspect botulism should contact the NICD 24-hour hotline (082-883-9920) for assistance with specimen collection and diagnosis. When a case of botulism is suspected, a case investigation form should be completed. This will provide public health officials with additional data to support case investigation and identification of possible sources of infection.</p>				
<p>Additional resources</p> <p>A Frequently Asked questions document on anthrax is available at http://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/botulism/ A case investigation form is available at http://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/botulism/</p>				