

# Info-MADO

## Bulletin regarding reportable diseases (MADO) Nunavik Department of Public Health

### CALL FOR VIGILANCE *Botulism outbreak in France*

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#### Background

An investigation is currently being carried out regarding an outbreak of botulism in France.

10 cases have thus far been reported, with the majority of the persons involved being foreigners (American, Canadian, German). Some of the reported cases where the persons in question are Canadian (N=3) involve people from Québec. One person has died, but this person was not from Canada.

All of the persons affected had gone, over the past week, to the same bar in Bordeaux, the Tchin Tchin Wine Bar. At this stage of the investigation, the suspected foodstuffs are homemade canned sardines prepared by the restaurant owner and served to 30 or so people between September 4 and 10, 2023.

The average incubation period for foodborne botulism is between 8 and 36 hours, but can be up to 10 days following the ingestion of the food in question. Persons who ate the suspected food could still contract the disease, given that said food was served up until September 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### Clinical presentation

- Vomiting, nausea, diarrhea
- Weakness, hypotension
- Dry mouth, blurred vision, double vision (diplopia), mydriasis, dysphagia, dysarthria, dysphonia, palpebral ptosis
- Dyspnea, desaturation, decrease in respiratory flow
- Intestinal blockage (ileus), constipation, vesical blockage

#### Laboratory analyses and treatment

- Bloodwork (must absolutely be done prior to administration of the antitoxin)
- Gastric fluid
- Feces
- Suspected foodstuffs (if available)

Treating botulism is essentially symptomatic and requires, in its most severe form, intensive respiratory care with assisted ventilation. Administering a botulism antitoxin in the hours or days following the initial presentation of symptoms may allow for reducing the time hospitalized.

The matter of administering or not the botulism antitoxin is a clinical decision of the attending physician that may, if necessary, be validated by the infectious disease physician on call at the Montréal University Health Centre (MUHC).

### **Evolution**

Whereas foodborne botulism is a toxicologic aliment that can prove fatal, the majority of those who contract it can quickly recover if rapidly diagnosed and treated. This being said, recovery can take several weeks to a few months.

### **Expectations from clinicians**

Nunavik clinicians are expected to be increasingly vigilant when dealing with a clinical presentation consistent with botulism or when treating a person who was possibly exposed to the toxin at the *Tchin Tchin Wine Bar* in Bordeaux.

Botulism is a reportable disease that must be very carefully monitored.

- *Quickly report any suspected case to the physician on call at the Nunavik Department of Public Health by telephone, at 1 855 964-2244 or 1 819 299-2990.*

### **Useful links**

[Toolbox - Botulism Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services \(nrhss.ca\)](https://www.nrbhss.ca)

[Public Health Notice: Outbreak of suspected botulism in Bordeaux, France linked to sardines from Tchin Tchin Wine Bar - Canada.ca](#)