

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (1) in DH SEB CD/8/19/4

5 August, 2013

Dear Doctors,

Clostridium botulinum contaminated follow-on formula

We write to alert you a food recall from the local market of two batches of follow-on formula which are made of raw materials that are potentially contaminated by *Clostridium botulinum*. According to information provided by the trade, the affected products are “Cow & Gate Happy Kid 3 (Growing Up Formula for 1-3 years) (牛欄牌第三階段幼兒助長奶粉) with expiry date on 27/6/2015 (batch number: 3178) & 28/6/2015 (batch number 3179)”. More details can be accessed at the website of the Centre for Food Safety: <http://www.cfs.gov.hk/eindex.html>.

Clostridium botulinum is a spore-forming, obligate anaerobic bacterium which can produce neurotoxin that causes botulism in human. There are different clinical categories of botulism including foodborne botulism; wound botulism; infant botulism or intestinal botulism and; inadvertent, following botulinum toxin injection. It is potentially life-threatening with symptoms characterized by symmetrical, descending, flaccid paralysis of motor and autonomic nerves. Although the affected products are potentially contaminated by *Clostridium botulinum* but not its preformed toxin, there is risk of intestinal botulism if spores of the bacteria are ingested. Infants under one year of age and immunocompromised adults, those using antimicrobials, or those with bowel abnormalities are susceptible to intestinal botulism after consuming the spores of the bacteria, which then grow in the intestine and release toxin, causing the disease.



The initial clinical signs of intestinal botulism are constipation, progressive weakness and poor feeding, weak cry, absent or diminished spontaneous movements, decreased sucking, hypotonia and decreased motor

response to stimuli. It may progress to paralysis and in severe cases, extensive respiratory muscle paralysis leads to ventilatory failure and death unless supportive care is provided.

If you have patients feeding on the affected products, please advise their parents or the caretakers to stop the affected products immediately. They can switch to other batches or formula. For children aged one year or above, they can also take cow milk, UHT milk or full fat milk powder instead.

The mainstay of treatment is supportive and if you encounter patients with clinical signs, symptoms, or history suspicious for botulism, please refer them to hospital promptly for clinical management. Please also report any suspected cases of botulism to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of the CHP (Telephone: 2477 2772, Fax: 2477 2770) or CENO On-line at <http://www.chp.gov.hk/ceno>.

Thank you for your unfailing support in prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK CHUANG)
for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health