

June 23, 2026

Health Awareness Notice for District of Columbia Healthcare Providers Multistate Infant Botulism Outbreak Linked to Infant Formula

SUMMARY

Federal, state, and local public health partners are investigating a multistate outbreak of infant botulism linked to Nara Organics Whole Milk Organic Infant Formula products. As of June 13, 2026, a total of 3 infants with suspected or confirmed infant botulism have been reported from 3 states (PA, CA, WA). No cases of infant botulism associated with this outbreak have been reported in the District.

Nara Organics Whole Milk Organic Infant Formula products have been recalled. Parents and caregivers are urged to stop using any Nara Organics infant formula immediately. Providers should consider infant botulism in infants with a history of Nara Organics infant formula consumption presenting with poor feeding, loss of head control, difficulty swallowing, and decreased facial expression. **If infant botulism is suspected, providers should immediately call the Infant Botulism Treatment and Prevention Program (IBTPP) at 510-231-7600 for consultation and release of BabyBIG®. Initial diagnosis is based on clinical presentation, and treatment should not be delayed for laboratory confirmation. Notify DC Health immediately if you suspect infant botulism in a patient at 844-493-2652.**

BACKGROUND

Infant botulism occurs when an infant ingests spores from *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria, which then grows in the large intestine and produces a toxin that blocks the neuromuscular junction by inhibiting the release of acetylcholine. Initial signs and symptoms often include constipation, difficulty feeding (difficulty sucking or swallowing), loss of head control, weak facial expression, and reduced muscle tone. Without prompt recognition and treatment, descending paralysis may progress and involve the respiratory muscles, potentially leading to life-threatening respiratory failure. The time from ingestion to symptom presentation can be up to 30 days.

Federal, state, and local public health partners are investigating a multistate outbreak of infant botulism linked to infant formula. As of June 13, 2026, a total of 3 infants with suspected or confirmed infant botulism have been reported from 3 states (PA, CA, WA). No cases of infant botulism associated with this outbreak have been reported in the District. The FDA is in the early stages of this investigation and further testing by FDA and state partners is underway. The FDA has been in contact with the firm and recommended that the firm conduct a voluntary recall due to the severity of illness and epidemiological signal. All Nara Organics brand Whole Milk Organic Powdered Infant Formula products have been voluntarily recalled.

Nara Organics Powdered Infant Formula was distributed nationally across Target retail stores, Target.com, and Nara.com between July 2025 and June 2026. This brand of formula makes up less than 1% of all infant formula available in the United States, and shortages of infant formula resulting from this recall are not expected.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Consider infant botulism a clinical diagnosis in any infant presenting with unexplained weakness, poor feeding, decreased head control, or difficulty swallowing — especially if the infant has consumed Nara Organics Whole Milk Organic Infant Formula.

Immediate actions when suspecting a case:

- **Do not wait** for laboratory confirmation to initiate case management. Early recognition and treatment are critical.
- Arrange for consultation with the [Infant Botulism Treatment & Prevention Program \(IBTPP\)](#) at **510-231-7600** for evaluation and treatment guidance. Consultation is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The on-call physician will provide a no-cost clinical consultation and, if indicated, authorize the release of BabyBIG®, the human-derived botulism immune globulin.
- If clinical consultation supports infant botulism, begin treatment with BabyBIG® without delay. Do not wait for laboratory confirmation.
- Infant botulism is a notifiable disease. **Report all suspected cases immediately to DC Health at 844-493-2652.**

A stool or enema sample using sterile, non-bacteriostatic water is required for definitive diagnosis of infant botulism. The DC Public Health Laboratory can coordinate diagnostic testing at the CDC. Results may take several days. Prompt reporting and early treatment are critical to improving outcomes and reducing the duration of hospitalization.

Institutions, hospitals, and clinical labs:

- Do **not** use or distribute any Nara Organics infant formula. Remove it from inventory and inform relevant staff.
- Clean and [sanitize](#) feeding areas and equipment that may have been exposed.
- Ensure clinical labs and pathology services are aware that infant botulism is a reportable condition and laboratory confirmation is critical for case investigation; ensure timely specimen collection and consultation with DC Health for information on specimen collection and confirmatory testing.
- Participate in trace-back, leftover product collection, and laboratory testing as requested by DC Health, CDC and the FDA.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC

- **Do not use any Nara Organics Whole Milk Organic Infant Formula.**
 - If unopened, throw away or return cans.
 - If opened, take a picture and record the lot number and use by date.
 - Consider keeping the formula. If your infant develops signs and symptoms of infant botulism, DC Health may collect the formula for testing. If you keep the formula, label it "**DO NOT USE**" and keep it stored in a safe place for at least a month.
 - If no symptoms appear after a month, throw the leftover formula away.

- Monitor for symptoms of botulism such as poor feeding, loss of head control, difficulty swallowing, or decreased facial expression, seek medical care **immediately** if symptoms appear. Early intervention is critical.
 - **Symptoms of infant botulism can take as long as several weeks to develop**, so parents should remain vigilant if they used Nara Organics Whole Milk Organic Infant Formula.
- Wash items and surfaces that may have touched the formula using hot soapy water or a dishwasher.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Infant botulism is immediately reportable in the District by phone at **844-493-2652** upon provisional diagnosis or the appearance of suspicious symptoms and confirmed by the submission of a case report within 24 hours via the [Notifiable Disease and Condition Case Report Form](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Infant Botulism Outbreak Linked to Powdered Infant Formula, June 2026 | CDC](#)
- [Outbreak Investigation of Infant Botulism: Powdered Infant Formula \(June 2026\) | FDA](#)
- [Infant Botulism Treatment and Prevention Program | California Department of Public Health](#)
- [Voluntary Recall of all Nara Organics Infant Formula | Nara Organics](#)

REFERENCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2026). Infant Botulism Outbreak Linked to Powdered Infant Formula, June 2026. <https://www.cdc.gov/botulism/outbreaks-investigations/infant-formula-june-2026/index.html>
- US Food & Drug Administration. Outbreak Investigation of Infant Botulism: Powdered Infant Formula (June 2026). <https://www.fda.gov/food/outbreaks-foodborne-illness/outbreak-investigation-infant-botulism-powdered-infant-formula-june-2026>
- California Department of Public Health. Infant botulism treatment and prevention program. <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/ObtainBabyBig.aspx>

Please visit the DC Health - Health Notices website (dchealth.dc.gov/page/health-notices) regularly for the most current information.

For questions, concerns, or to report a suspect case, please contact the DC Health Division of Epidemiology-Disease Surveillance and Investigation at:
Phone: 844-493-2652 | Fax: (202) 442-8060 | Email: doh.epi@dc.gov