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Posted by [Claire Mitchell](#) on September 07, 2011

8 Cases of Botulism in France Linked to Olive Tapenade

A French company, La Ruche, has [recalled](#) all Les Délices de Marie Claire preserves and has suspended operations after a production batch of its Tapenade verte aux amandes was linked to eight cases of botulism.

L'Institute Pasteur reported finding botulinum toxin type A in a sample of the implicated batch of olive-almond tapenade.

Consumers in France, Belgium and Denmark are being advised to not eat Les Délices de Marie Claire brand Tapenade aux amandes, Lot no. 112005, with a best-before date of 16-12-2012.

[Botulism is a rare but potentially life-threatening bacterial illness](#) that is caused by the ingestion of a toxin produced by *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria. Botulism poisoning is extremely rare, but is so dangerous that each diagnosed case is considered a public health emergency.

[Symptoms of botulism](#) generally appear 12 to 72 hours after eating contaminated food. Those symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, fatigue, dizziness, double vision, drooping eyelids, difficulty swallowing, slurred speech, muscle weakness, and paralysis. With treatment, illness lasts from 1 to 10 days. Full recovery from botulism poisoning can take weeks to months. However, some people never fully recover.

<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm271449.htm>

FDA NEWS RELEASE

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FDA warns consumers of botulism risk in La Ruche tapenade, spreadable tomato paste

Severe botulism cases reported in France linked to these products

The FDA is warning consumers not to eat tapenade or spreadable dried tomato paste manufactured by the French food company La Ruche. French health authorities have reported an outbreak of botulism in France linked to the company's products sold under the brand names "Les délices de Marie-Claire," "Terre de Mistral" and Les Secrets d'Anais." Eight adults are currently suffering from respiratory failure as a result of eating foods containing the neurotoxin produced by *Clostridium botulinum*.

French authorities have ordered production halted at the company's facility in France and have directed that all products sold under those brand names be recalled.

Products of the brands noted above are considered a severe threat to public health and should not be eaten. If consumers purchased any of these products, either while traveling in France or online, throw them away. If consumers have recently eaten any of these products and have symptoms of botulism, see your healthcare provider immediately.

At this time, the FDA has no indication that any of these products has been imported into the U.S. The FDA also has no information that this outbreak has affected anyone in the U.S. FDA has increased its monitoring of shipments from this area of the world and has issued a bulletin to its Field Offices today to be vigilant in this area.

Botulism can result in death due to respiratory failure. The classic symptoms of botulism include double vision, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, dry mouth, and muscle weakness. Infants with botulism appear lethargic, feed poorly, are constipated, and have a weak cry and poor muscle tone. These are all symptoms of the muscle paralysis caused by the bacterial toxin. If untreated, these symptoms may progress to cause paralysis of the respiratory muscles, arms, legs, and trunk. In foodborne botulism, symptoms generally begin 18 to 36 hours after eating a contaminated food, but they can occur as early as 6 hours or as late as 10 days.