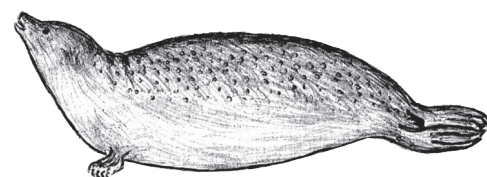


Botulism



Why should we be concerned?

- The botulism bacteria are found naturally in walrus and seal. The bacteria may also be found in whale.
- Botulism bacteria can make toxins if they do not have air. The toxins from the bacteria can cause a sickness in humans called "botulism".
- Botulism sickness can be very serious in humans and can even cause death.

How does it make people sick?



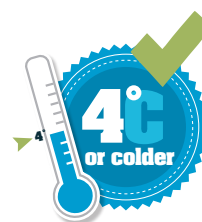
- Bacteria can grow and make toxins **if they do not have air**. The bacteria itself does not make people sick. The toxin created by the bacteria makes people sick.
- Some ways of storing and aging meat can grow botulism toxin and make the meat unsafe to eat. Toxins are formed when the meat does not have contact with air. These ways of storing meat are unsafe and should **not** be used:

- Keeping raw seal, walrus or whale in closed plastic containers or plastic bags at temperatures above 4°C (warmer than a refrigerator)
- Leaving raw seal, walrus or whale in a closed plastic bag in the sunshine
- Aging meat or fat in closed containers



What can we do to keep safe from botulism?

- ✓ Remove the stomach and intestines of seal, whale and walrus right after harvesting.
- ✓ Store raw meat and fat in cold conditions (4°C or colder).
- ✓ Do not age meat in closed containers. Country food should be aged in a cool place that lets air in. Plastic containers and plastic bags should not be used to age country food.
- ✓ Keep leftovers in a refrigerator, not on the stove or counter overnight. Do not keep food at room temperature for more than 2 hours. Leftovers (like seal broth, seal stew) should be cooked for at least 10 minutes before being served again.
- ✓ Botulism toxin can be killed by cooking. Eating well-cooked meat will not cause sickness.



REMEMBER: Botulism bacteria and toxins do not have a flavour or smell. Botulism toxin is not what makes the good flavour of aged meat.

