

HONEY AT THE RESCUE & IT KEEPS WELL

From: Geri Guidetti <arkinst@concentric.net>  
Newsgroups: misc.survivalism  
Subject: Re: Eureka:Honey  
Date: Thu, 25 Jul 1996 20:16:29 -0400

Duane Miles wrote:

Benjamin A. Klingler wrote:

I have also heard some stuff about Botulism and honey but I'm not sure exactly what it's about so don't worry!

If I recall correctly, honey contains very, very small amounts of the bacteria that cause botulism. For adults, this seldom causes problems.

Our immune system is capable of dealing with small numbers of even nasty bacteria, they do it all the time.

The problem is when we get large numbers of bacteria, or when our immune system is damaged or not yet developed.

That is where the problem with honey comes in.

Some people used to use honey to sweeten milk or other foods for infants. Infants immune systems sometimes cannot handle the bacteria that cause botulism, and, ofcourse, those infants became seriously ill.

So pediatricians now advise strongly against using honey for children under a certain age.

Yes, honey can contain the temperature resistant spores of

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Clostridium botulinum, the bacterium that causes botulism.

The organism is a strict anaerobe, meaning that it only grows in the absence of molecular oxygen.

The problem with infants and honey is that the small, intestinal tract of an infant apparently is sufficiently anaerobic to allow the spores to germinate into actively growing C. botulinum organisms.

Essentially, the infant serves the same role as a sealed, airtight, contaminated can of beans as far as the organisms are concerned.

There in the infant's body the bacteria secrete the dangerous toxin that causes the symptoms of botulism. There have been quite a few documented infant deaths due to honey.

As I recall, the studies identifying honey as the source were done in the '80s.

Most pediatricians recommend no honey for the first year.  
It is probably best to check with your own for even later updates...

Geri Guidetti, The Ark Institute

Benjamin A. Klingler wrote:

Keep in mind, honey doesn't store very well. You will notice that it starts to breakdown after a couple of months.

Subject: Re: Eureka:Honey  
Message-ID: <31F51F14.1D80@sysdiv.sdl.usu.edu>  
From: Duane Miles <dmiles@sysdiv.sdl.usu.edu>  
Date: Tue, 23 Jul 1996 11:51:00 -0700

What to do you mean "break down?" We have honey we have stored for five

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years or more that has crystallized, but all you need to do is heat it gently and it will liquify again. It is still edible, in fact, I sometimes prefer some with some crystallization to put on toast.

I think that edible honey has been found in the Egyptian tombs. I don't understand exactly what you mean when you say it doesn't store well.

From: sbutler@boi.hp.com (Sylvan Butler)  
Newsgroups: misc.survivalism  
Subject: Re: Eureka:Honey  
Date: 23 Jul 1996 19:22:39 GMT

Really? My experience has been exactly opposite. Unless the honey is contaminated (such as with water), in an airtight container it should store for years. I've often eaten honey that was 2-5 yrs old.

It will usually crystalize (turning white, perhaps to a creamy consistency but most usually to a very hard solid). This can be used as is or melted over very low heat (you don't want to cook the honey, just melt it).

I usually melt it by putting the container in a pan of water (creating something like a double-boiler) on the stove over the lowest heat possible. Leave it like this for a day or two.

If the water is too warm to hold your hand in, it is too hot. If you heat the honey too hot it changes the flavor a bit (usually stronger) and will often crystalize faster the next time, but it is still edible.