



CONSUMER

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  EXTENSION

food safety

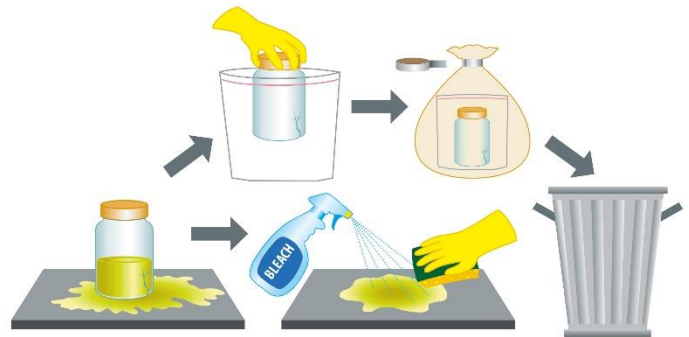
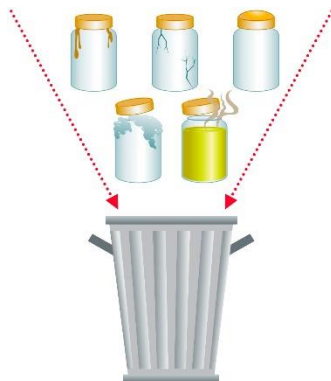
Safety While Canning: How to Protect Yourself from Botulism

Botulism toxin is produced by bacteria called *Clostridium botulinum*. The bacteria and toxin can be found in home canned foods that have not been properly prepared, unrefrigerated home foods, and traditionally prepared salted or fermented seafood. Very small amounts can cause severe illness and death.



To protect yourself from botulism, never simply “hot pour” your food into a jar and seal it for storage. Foods must be prepared using recipes that have been tested for safety. Many foods require the use of a pressure cooker to heat food to high enough temperatures to kill the bacteria and toxin.

Always immediately dispose of any cracked jars or potentially contaminated food. Put on gloves before handling the containers, and put the food or container into a sealable bag. Wrap another plastic bag around the sealable bag, and tape it shut. Place the bags in a trash receptacle.



Do not discard in the sink, garbage disposal, toilet, compost pile, or recycling container. Always wipe up spills of potentially contaminated food with bleach.



If you are experiencing any symptoms associated with botulism that appear within a few hours or up to 10 days after eating canned food, go immediately to a hospital.