



## CASE DEFINITION

Interim document, 10-23-03

## Ricin or Abrin Ingestion

### Clinical description

Ingestion of ricin (or abrin, a closely related toxin) typically leads to profuse vomiting and diarrhea, which may or may not be bloody, followed by hypovolemic shock and multisystem organ failure. Weakness and influenza-like symptoms of fever, myalgia, and arthralgia may also be reported.

### Laboratory criteria for diagnosis

- Detection of ricin or abrin in urine or plasma OR
- Detection of ricin or abrin in environmental samples

### Case classification

*Probable:* a clinically compatible case with a high index of suspicion (reliable intelligence or patient history) for ricin or abrin exposure or with an epidemiological link to a laboratory-confirmed case

*Confirmed:* a clinically compatible case with laboratory confirmation

**Note:** A case should not be considered ricin or abrin poisoning if there is another confirmed diagnosis to explain the signs and symptoms.

This case definition is based on CDC's best current information.  
It may be updated as new information becomes available.

For more information, visit [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov) or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY).

October 23, 2003

Page 1 of 1