

BUTTON BATTERIES



Cardinal Pediatrics
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What you need to know!

Button batteries or lithium coin batteries are not exactly the same, but both are small round batteries that power many electronic devices. They're found in remote controls and many other household items. **Products designed for children may also contain these button batteries or lithium batteries, such as games, toys, flashing shoes, clothing and jewelry.**

How can these batteries injure children?

When the battery comes into contact with body fluids, the lithium coin batteries generate a current that produces small amounts of a chemical called sodium hydroxide, a harsh corrosive similar to lye. If the battery gets stuck somewhere in the body, the lye burns a hole in that spot. Infection usually follows. The result can be serious injury and illness, long term disability and even death.

If a battery is placed in the ear, there may be noticeable drainage or pus. Batteries lodged in the ear or nose can cause extensive damage to structures such as eardrums and nasal septum. The lye burns can lead to infections and, in some cases, cause permanent breathing, smell and hearing issues.

When lodged in the esophagus the lye produced by the electric current produces burns to that site. The esophagus and nearby structures in the chest can be damaged, including the windpipe, lungs and large blood vessels. Serious infection usually follows and bleeding caused by blood vessel damage can create an immediate, life-threatening emergency.

What can I do ...

If you suspect your child has ingested a button battery or lithium battery in the past 12 hours:

- If your child is OVER 12 months of age and can swallow liquids - give two teaspoons of honey. You can give up to six doses of honey about 10 minutes apart. DO NOT give your child anything else to eat or drink. If your child vomits, do NOT offer another dose. Go to your nearest Emergency Room
- Diagnosis and treatment will involve an x-ray to confirm if a button battery is stuck within the body. Treatment is urgent removal. The goal is to limit damage to surrounding tissue, and to treat injury that has occurred. A child who has ingested a button battery or lithium coin battery needs a follow up to identify long term and/or delayed complications.

Parents and caregivers need to be AWARE of the risks and attempt to keep button batteries and lithium batteries out of the reach of children. Ask your health care provider if you want to discuss this further.



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Remember we are only a phone call away!