

# facts on

## Button Battery Safety

*Button batteries are seriously harmful to children if ingested.  
They are not just a choking hazard.*

### What is a button battery?

A button battery is a small, round, flat battery, shaped like a button. Sometimes they are called lithium batteries.



### Where are they located?

Button batteries are found in a variety of commonly used household objects.

- Calculators
- Cameras
- Child toys and singing books
- Electronic toothbrushes
- Flameless candles
- Flashing jewelry or decorations
- Flashlights and laser lights
- Handheld games
- Hearing aids
- Key fobs
- Singing greeting cards
- Watches



### Are button batteries an issue?

Young children are at most risk. They are most likely to place objects in their mouths. Small and shiny objects are attractive to young children. They may swallow button batteries. Since 2006, an average of 65 emergency room visits per year have been associated with button batteries in Canada. Of these incidents, 70% were ingestion incidents.

### What are the health risks?

Swallowing button batteries can have serious and sometimes fatal consequences. When a child, adult, or animal swallows a button battery, saliva triggers an electrical current. This causes a chemical reaction that can severely burn internal organs. Serious internal chemical burns to the esophagus (throat), stomach, and intestines can develop in less than two hours.

### For More Information

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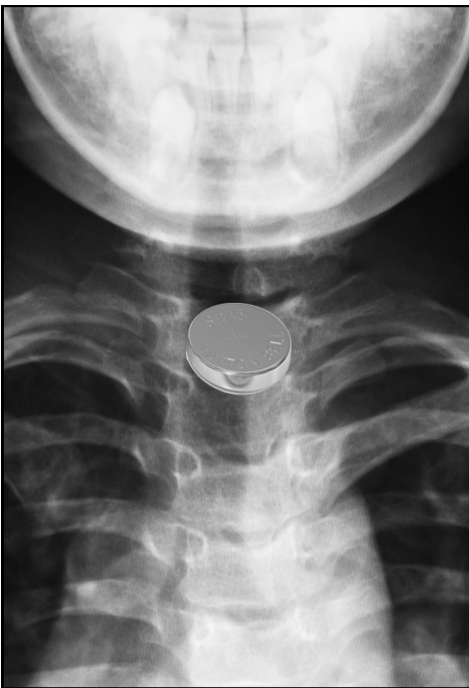
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Button batteries can also cause damage if they are stuck in the nose or ears. Repairing the internal organ damage can require ongoing medical care, including breathing tubes and multiple surgeries.

### What are the symptoms?

The scary part is that it may not be obvious at first that there is something wrong. Children can still breathe and act normally after swallowing a battery. The symptoms can be tricky to recognize. Signs and symptoms include: choking, coughing, drooling, vomiting, decreased appetite, fever, and abdominal pain.



### Button battery safety tips:

- Know which products in your home are powered by button batteries.
- Check your home for loose or spare coin batteries, and devices that use them.
- Store unused batteries, other batteries, and products that use button batteries in a locked cabinet or a container that is out of reach of young children. Do not allow your child to play with button batteries.

- Check that all household products using button batteries have screws to secure the battery compartment. This will help ensure your child does not access the button battery compartment. If the battery compartment does not have a screw, you can use strong tape.
- When buying new batteries, choose the child resistant packaging that needs to be opened with scissors.
- Only adults should change batteries.
- Recycle or throw old button batteries away carefully, in an outside bin, out of reach of children.
- When visiting family members and friends, be aware that their homes may have button batteries that are easily accessible to young children.

### GETTING HELP

- **If you suspect your child has swallowed a button battery, or put one in his nose or ear, go to the emergency room right away.**
- **Immediately tell the admitting staff about the battery ingestion.**
- **Do not induce vomiting.**
- **Do not have your child eat or drink anything until assessed by a medical professional.**

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