



Batteries can cause devastating injuries

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Image: gettyimages.com

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Swallowed batteries can burn through a child's oesophagus in just 2 hours, leading to surgery, months with feeding and breathing tubes, and even death.

A 20 mm, 3-volt lithium coin battery, about the size of a 20c coin is the most hazardous as it is big enough to get stuck and therefore burn faster. With Christmas approaching and some toys using these batteries, ensure that the battery compartments are secured and keep loose batteries away from children.¹

Lithium coin batteries are particularly dangerous as they can burn through tissues and often blood vessels within hours. Parents are often oblivious to the fact that their child has swallowed the battery and the first symptoms they are aware of, is their child vomiting blood. Sadly, this is often too late to save the child as irreparable damage has already occurred.²

If a Battery is Swallowed or Placed in the Ear or Nose

Call 082 911 immediately or take your child to the closest Emergency Department. Prompt action is critical. Don't wait for symptoms to develop.

If the battery was swallowed, don't eat or drink until an x-ray shows the battery is beyond the esophagus. Batteries stuck in the oesophagus must be removed as quickly as possible as severe damage can occur in just 2 hours.

Batteries in the nose or ear also must be removed immediately to avoid permanent damage.¹

Protecting Young Children

Store batteries out of sight and reach. If recycling is not possible, wrap used batteries securely and discard them where a child can't find them.

Check all household devices to be certain the battery compartment is securely shut. Use strong tape to secure compartments that children can open or that might pop open if the device is dropped.

Batteries are everywhere. Check:

<i>remote controls</i>	<i>garage door openers</i>
<i>bathroom scales</i>	<i>toys</i>
<i>cameras</i>	<i>watches</i>
<i>calculators</i>	<i>digital thermometers</i>
<i>hearing aids</i>	<i>singing greeting cards</i>
<i>talking books</i>	<i>portable radios</i>
<i>cell phones</i>	<i>flash and pen lights</i>
<i>flashing shoes</i>	<i>keychains</i>
<i>any household item that is powered!</i>	

Don't insert or change batteries in front of small children.¹

If a battery is missing and you think it likely your child may have swallowed it, take your child to A&E for an x-ray to be sure.²



Important Emergency Numbers
Netcare 911: 082 911 • SAPS: 10111
Injury.Prevention@netcare.co.za

NETCARE
082911
24HR EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE



You're in safe hands