

DECEMBER 2021 CCDC SAFETY MESSAGE

BUTTON BATTERY SAFETY

Button Batteries Pose Sizeable Risks

According to the National Safety Council and the National Capital Poison Center, the number of serious injuries or deaths as a result of button batteries has increased nine-fold in the last decade.

Coin lithium batteries are also known as button batteries. These little silver-colored batteries power everything from toys and electronics to watches and musical greeting cards. Many people do not always recognize the hidden dangers lurking inside seemingly harmless items, such as remote-control devices, hearing aids, and keyless remote door openers for vehicles.

Young children, pets and even adults have a tendency to put things in their mouths, noses, or ears. Button batteries if swallowed or inhaled can cause serious injury or death. Every year, more than 2,800 kids are treated in emergency rooms after swallowing button batteries: that is one child every three hours.

Button Batteries can be Extremely Dangerous

If swallowed or placed in the nose or ears, button batteries can cause serious injury or death, according to the National Capital Poison Center. More than 3,500 people of all ages swallow button batteries every year in the United States. Most pass through the body and are eliminated, but sometimes they get hung up in the esophagus. An electrical current can form in the body and hydroxide, an alkaline chemical, can cause tissue burns that can be fatal.

Button batteries also can cause permanent injury when placed in the nose or the ears, the Poison Center says. Young children and elderly people (wearing hearing aids) have been particularly involved in this type of incident. If you suspect a battery lodged in the nose or ear, watch for pain or discharge, and do not use nose or ear drops until the person has been examined by a doctor.

Safety Precautions

In partnership with Safe Kids Worldwide and Energizer here are steps to protect children, pets, and adults:

- Look in your home for any items that may contain coin-sized button batteries - toys, animated or noise making devices, watches, hearing aids, remote controls
- Whenever possible, select batteries in child-resistant safety packaging
- Keep loose or spare batteries locked away
- Place devices out of sight and out of reach of small children or pet
- Share this life-saving information with caregivers, friends, family members and sitters

What to Do in an Emergency

The Poison Center outlines steps to take if you suspect someone has ingested a button battery:

- Call the 24-hour National Battery Ingestion Hotline (800) 498-8666
- If available, provide the battery identification number, found on the package or from a matching battery
- In most cases, an X-ray must be obtained to determine whether the battery has passed through the esophagus into the stomach; if the battery remains in the esophagus, it must be removed immediately
- Do not induce vomiting; do not eat or drink until the X-ray shows the battery is beyond the esophagus
- Report fever, abdominal pain, vomiting or blood in stools immediately

THINK SMART, BE AWARE, BE FLEXIBLE, BE EDUICATED (SAFE)