The Dangers of Button Batteries

What is a button battery?

- Button Batteries can be found in electronic devices, such as remote controls, calculators, LED lights, watches and key fobs
- Swallowing a button battery, known as button battery ingestion (BBI), can cause significant harm in children and there are an increasing number of BBI cases worldwide
- Most BBI incidents in children take place at home and occur in those below 6 years of age
- The shiny surface of the battery can be very appealing for a child

Why are button batteries dangerous?

- BBI can lead to life-threatening complications and death if not identified early and dealt with quickly, as damage can occur within 2 hours
- Batteries in the throat typically pose the highest risk of complications in children
- Most problems occur after unwitnessed ingestions, as symptoms are not specific to BBI - considering the possibility of BBI when your child displays unexplained symptoms is vital
How do you know if your child has swallowed a button battery?

**Most WITNESSED ingestions present with:**
- □ Vomiting
- □ Drooling
- □ Swallowing difficulty/pain
- □ Irritability
- □ Coughing
- □ High-pitched, wheezing sound when breathing
- □ Shortness of breath

**Most UNWITNESSED ingestions present with:**
- □ Vomiting or coughing up blood
- □ Black, tar-like, sticky faeces
- □ Abdominal pain
- □ Weight loss
- □ Chest pain
- □ Cough
- □ High-pitched, wheezing sound when breathing
- □ Hoarseness
- □ Fever

How can you prevent button battery ingestion?
- Identify which devices use button batteries in your home
- Do not leave discarded button batteries around the home – take waste batteries to a collection point or at least store them out of sight and reach of young children
- Securely fasten the battery compartment after replacing a button battery

What should you do if you suspect your child has swallowed a button battery?
- Seek immediate medical attention at a hospital emergency room.
  If possible, take the appliance containing the battery or the original product packaging
- Do not let your child eat or drink
- Do not induce vomiting


Information has also been sourced from the European Portable Battery Association (EPBA) ‘Button batteries: out of reach, out of danger’ website: https://buttonbatteryingestion.com/en

For more information and guidance on button battery ingestion, please visit/watch:
2. EPBA video: https://youtu.be/nwLLFJUcphw/

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