

Prevent your child from swallowing batteries

Information for parents

Swallowing a battery can be very harmful. How can you prevent your child from swallowing a battery? And what can you do if it does happen?

How does it happen?

Battery swallowing can happen when children play with things that are not meant to be toys, such as a remote control, calculator, camera or bicycle lights. Because they are not toys, they have not been made safe for children. The battery can be taken out easily. Children can mistake small round batteries (button cell batteries) for sweets. Make sure your child doesn't play with such things; put them away safely. This includes candles with batteries or a birthday card with music in it. Put these in a safe place. Also, pay attention to where you keep batteries in the house. Are they stored properly? Can your child reach them?

How can you prevent your child from swallowing a battery?

- Buy batteries that are tightly packed so that your child cannot open them easily. Put batteries in a safe place where your child can't reach them. If you buy toys or devices for your home that your child can reach, make sure that the battery holder can only be opened with a screwdriver or a coin.
- Don't change batteries (e.g. in the remote control) in front of your child. This way, your child cannot see how to get to the batteries.
- Take empty batteries to a collection point regularly. Don't leave them lying around. Put them in a safe place until you take them away. Make sure your child cannot reach them.
- Never let your child play with batteries.
- Buy toys that have been tested. Good labels include the German GS mark, TV-Rheinland or the British standard BS.
- Never put a battery in your mouth to 'hold' it. That is very dangerous. It also prevents your child from imitating you.

What should you do if your child has (probably) swallowed a battery?

- Always call 112. The emergency worker will tell you what to do.
- It helps to know what kind of battery it is. If you can, take the device the battery came from with you to the hospital.
- Do not let your child eat or drink after swallowing a (button cell) battery. Only do this if the 112 operator says so.
- Your child must be taken to the hospital immediately. An X-ray will probably be taken to see if your child really swallowed a battery and where it is located. Then a treatment plan will be made to help your child.

A battery in the nose or ear

A battery stuck in your child's nose or ear can also cause serious problems. The battery should be removed quickly. Contact a doctor as soon as possible.

