

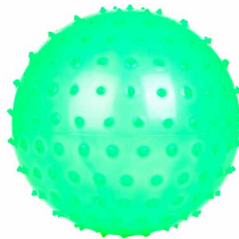
# Button Battery Safety

Button batteries are small flat circular lithium cell batteries that are used to power a wide variety of items within the home, including watches, car key fobs, some remote controls, children's electronic toys, LED lights, calculators, digital thermometers, scales, and musical greetings cards.

Owing to their size and shape, usually being 1-2cm's in diameter, around the size of a 5p coin, to a baby or young child they can easily be mistaken for a sweet and swallowed.

When swallowed, the battery can react with bodily fluids resulting in a chemical reaction and the release of caustic soda, a strong alkali chemical that can burn through body tissue. Even 'dead' batteries can release caustic soda so should be treated with as much caution as new batteries.

Two children in the UK die each year from swallowing a button battery and many more are left with life-changing injuries. The risk of swallowing a button battery is most prevalent in children under the age of six.



## What are the symptoms of swallowing a button battery?

- Coughing
- Gagging
- Drooling
- Pointing to their throat or stomach or complaining of pain

Some children do not display any or obvious symptoms.

## What to do if you suspect a child has swallowed a button battery

- Take the child to your nearest A&E department as quickly as possible or call 999.
- If you can, take the battery packaging or item the battery came from to A&E as this can help staff to identify the battery type.
- Act fast and trust your instincts, if you suspect get help.
- **Do not** give the child anything to eat or drink.
- **Do not** try to make the child vomit.



## Staying safe and being vigilant

- Store button batteries securely and out of reach of children.
- When opening button battery packaging, watch that none fall on the floor where they could be picked up by a child.
- Know what toys and items within the home contain button batteries.
- Buy items containing button batteries from reputable retailers to ensure they meet regulatory requirements.
- If you spot the battery compartment of a toy is insecure, remove from play immediately and repair or discard safely. You can report faulty toys to Trading Standards.
- Teach older children the dangers of button batteries and why they should not play with them or give them to young children or babies.
- Safely discard 'dead' button batteries at your local recycling centre or in a battery collection bin. **Do not put them in a general waste bin.**

For more information contact [tsadvice@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:tsadvice@westberks.gov.uk),  
tel **01635 519930**

### Notes:

The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) is a shared service delivering Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards to over 450,000 people and 10,000 businesses on behalf of two authorities (Partners), Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Council. In addition, PPP provide Trading Standards Services to Wokingham Borough Council.

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