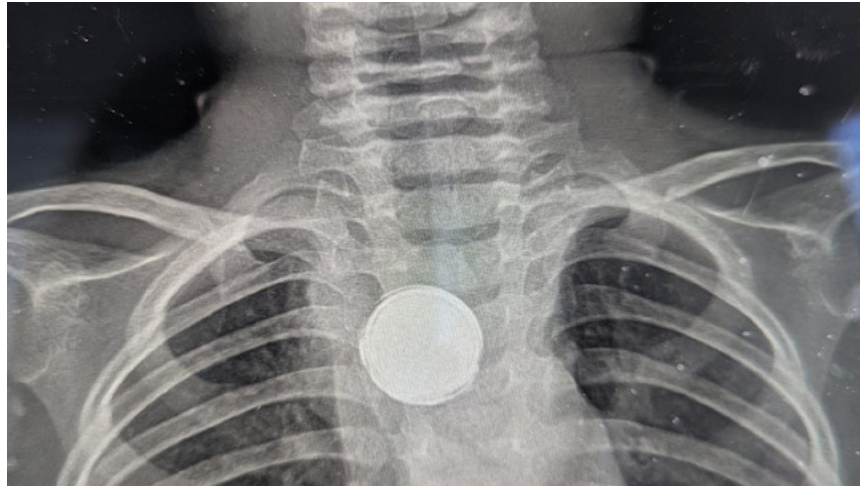


Too much in toddler's x-ray: Battery found lodged in his esophagus for weeks

[cbs12.com/news/nation-world/toddler-x-ray-swallowed-battery-lithium-found-lodged-esophagus-weeks-erica-kc-luke-mcmillan-eating-salt-lake-city-arizona](https://www.cbs12.com/news/nation-world/toddler-x-ray-swallowed-battery-lithium-found-lodged-esophagus-weeks-erica-kc-luke-mcmillan-eating-salt-lake-city-arizona)

by AMANDA GILBERT | KUTV Staff

Thursday, February 9th 2023



[VIEW ALL PHOTOS](#)

Luke McMillan should be feeling much better without the battery, Feb. 8, 2023. (Erica McMillan)

SALT LAKE CITY (KUTV) — The parents of a one-year-old boy know their son's story could've been a lot worse, and his recovery isn't over yet.

Their toddler tasted a lithium button battery, swallowing it weeks ago, and it landed in an especially troublesome spot.

He was only 15 months old, so he wasn't walking yet. Being a baby, he was just eating stuff," Erica McMillan said of her son Luke.

Reporter Amanda Gilbert spoke to Luke's parents, Feb. 8, 2023. (KUTV)

She noted he was like any baby wanting to explore this big, new world, but Luke's curiosity prompted concern when the battery unknowingly became lodged in his esophagus.

Erica noticed Luke struggling to swallow, sometimes even vomiting up solid foods, so she took him to the doctor. They treated him for an ear infection, but Luke was not getting any better. After several trips to the doctor, Erica said medics took an x-ray of her son.

Luke's father, KC McMillan, told KUTV doctors asked, "Has he been around any coins?" To which Erica and KC replied, "No."

Doctors discovered there was a battery stuck in Luke's esophagus.

It was next to the aorta; it could have gotten burned into his heart," Erica said. "It was a super-emotional day. They rushed him to surgery and said there was a possibility he might not make it because of where it was lodged.

Doctors determined the battery had been there for five to six weeks, based off Luke's symptoms.

Erica said, "If you ever told a doctor he had a battery in for that long, they would not believe you.



The lithium battery that was lodged in Luke McMillan's esophagus. (Erica McMillan)

In the end, the boy's life was saved by a little piece of electrical tape wrapped around the battery. Still, doctors discovered some of Luke's esophagus was burned and scared.

The family said the options for treatment were limited near their home in Arizona so they chose to treat Luke in Salt Lake City. He recently underwent surgery, with a second scheduled for the near future.

KC shared, "The surgeons scope down his throat and cut away the scar tissue, so now the esophagus is closer to where it should be at full size.

Erica wanted to tell other parents, "I honestly believe in a 'mom gut,' and if you don't feel like something is right, then it's OK to pursue and ask questions. If we didn't do the x-ray and hadn't found the battery when we did, then it could have ended worse.

A GoFundMe was organized by Luke's grandmother, Kim Baldwin Daley, in order to ease the financial burden that has been placed upon Luke's family due to medical expenses.

According to the National Capital Poison Center, "Swallowed batteries burn through a child's esophagus in just two hours, leading to surgery, months with feeding and breathing tubes, and even death.