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Button batteries, a rising risk, force Chuck E. Cheese toy recall

Button batteries can be exposed if children crush or pull apart
Chuck E. Cheese light-up rings or star glasses.



Consumer Product Safety Commission/AP/File

This undated file photo shows several Chuck E. Cheese light-up rings that were recalled Sept. 15 over concerns that children might swallow the small button batteries inside the toys. Research suggests that severe injuries in children, though relatively scarce, are on the rise.

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Laurent Belsie

Nothing seemed particularly hazardous about the Chuck E. Cheese light-up rings when the restaurant chain began distributing them in 2009.

Ditto for the star glasses, which were part of a birthday promotion this year.

But inside them was a button battery that, in one instance, was swallowed by a child and, in another, was found in a child's nostril, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The CPSC found that the toys could be crushed or pulled apart, possibly exposing the battery. And those ubiquitous tiny batteries, used in everything from watches to games, pose a rising risk to children if swallowed, researchers say.

So on Sept. 15, CEC Enterprises, the parent company of the Chuck E. Cheese child-oriented pizza chain, announced a recall of 1.1 million light-up rings and 120,000 star glasses. Consumers can take them back to the store for a refund of \$1 or \$4.99, respectively. The company can be reached at (888) 778-7193 or guestrelations@cecentertainment.com.

The share of battery ingestions that have caused fatalities or major medical problems rose sevenfold between 1985 and 2009, according to a study published in May in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Thirteen fatalities have been linked to swallowing batteries, all of them in children under age 4, according to a June study published in *Journal Watch*.