



Swallowed disc battery requires surgery

Published: Sept. 21, 2010 at 9:13 PM

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Sept. 21 (UPI) -- Swallowing a disc battery can lead to severe esophagus injury, U.S. doctors warn.

Dr. Stanley Kimball of Mount Carmel Health System in Columbus, Ohio, and colleagues reviewed medical charts from a 10-year period and conclude severe injury can occur rapidly following disc battery ingestion and recommended endoscopic surgery to remove the battery to avoid life-threatening damage to the esophagus.

The study, published in the Archives of Otolaryngology -- Head & Neck, revealed out of 10 patients, three had minimal damage to the esophagus and the other seven patients had more severe damage. Five sustained damage to the smooth muscle lining the esophagus and two, who had a delayed diagnoses, experienced a perforation of the esophagus.

"A disc battery is an increasingly common foreign body ingested by children," the study authors say in a statement. "When the battery is lodged in the esophagus, its alkaline contents can leak, causing tissue death and burns from electrical discharge.

The researchers, noting the patients averaged 3.2 years old, urged parents need to be alert to the hazard.