

CDC cautions parents about dangers of button batteries

Friday, 26 October 2012

<u>CNN</u> "The Chart" blog reports that the Centers for Disease Control is warning parents of the dangers of small coin-sized batteries often called "button batteries."

The blog says that "according to an article in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, approximately 40,400 children aged 12 and younger were treated in emergency rooms for battery-related injuries between 1997 and 2010."

The report also found that 14 children, all of them under 4, died after swallowing batteries. Additionally, the blog notes that the Consumer Product Safety Commission is "calling on the battery and electronics industry to develop warning labels and other ways to protect children."

<u>ABC</u>, in its "Medical Unit" blog, quotes Scott Wolfson, director of communications for the Consumer Product Safety Commission, who called these batteries a "serious hazard." Wolfson remarked, "There is growing attention to this hazard and an increase in the number of fatalities." He added, "today, more of these small batteries are being used in products such as remote controls, greeting cards, flashlights and CPSC is seeing children getting access to those batteries."

In a related story, the <u>NBC News</u> "Vitals" blog reports that "doctors also have warned that button batteries can be inhaled, injuring children's airways." Additionally, the CDC has recommended that "parents and caregivers should be aware of the potential hazards associated with battery exposure (particularly ingestion of button batteries), and ensure that products containing them are either kept away from children or that the batteries are secured safely in the product."

NPR also covers the story in its"Shots" health blog. The blog offers some safety advice for parents with young children: "keep remotes and other battery-powered devices away from young kids, unless the battery compartment is secure. And be aware that small children may be unable or unwilling to say they've swallowed a battery or given one to a brother or sister.



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