

# Local organization warns against battery swallowing hazard

 [wmbfnews.com/story/20319431/local-organization-warns-against-battery-swallowing-hazard/](http://wmbfnews.com/story/20319431/local-organization-warns-against-battery-swallowing-hazard/)

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Source: [syracuse.com](http://syracuse.com)

MYRTLE BEACH, SC (WMBF) - With the holiday season underway, many people will buy gifts that come with little button sized batteries installed.

Those batteries could be a huge hazard to children even if they aren't in the toys they play with.

According to McLeod Safe Kids Pee Dee/Coastal, swallowing cases of coin lithium batteries has more than quadrupled between 2006 and 2010 as compared to five years prior, 2001 to 2005.

In 2010 alone, there were more than 3,400 reported swallowing cases involving button batteries of all sizes.

Some of those resulting in life-threatening or debilitating injuries and even deaths, according to Dr. Toby Litovitz, of the National Capital Poison Center.

Coin-sized button batteries are found in everyday devices such as mini remote control devices that unlock car doors and control MP3 speakers, calculators, bathroom scales, reading lights, flameless candles, talking and singing books and greeting cards.

These batteries are extremely dangerous if swallowed.

Since many devices that use the coin lithium batteries are not children's toys, the battery compartments aren't childproof making it easier for children to open.

When a coin-sized button battery gets stuck in a child's throat, the saliva triggers an electrical current.

It takes as little as two hours to cause severe burns, and damage can continue even after the battery is removed.

Children can still breathe with the coin lithium battery in their throats, so it may not be obvious at first that something is wrong.

Repairing the damage from swallowing a battery is painful and can require multiple surgeries.

Safe Kids Pee Dee/Coastal offers the following safety tips to protect children from battery-related injuries:

- **SEARCH** your home and any place your child goes, for gadgets that may contain coin lithium batteries.
- **SECURE** coin lithium battery-controlled devices out of sight and reach of children and keep loose batteries locked away.
- **SHARE** this life-saving information with caregivers, friends, family members and sitters.

Keeping these batteries out of reach and secured in devices is key, but if a child swallows a battery, parents and caregivers should follow these steps:

- Go to the nearest Emergency Department immediately. Tell doctors and nurses that your child may have swallowed a battery. If possible, provide the medical team with the identification number found on the battery's package.
- Do not let the child eat or drink until a chest X-ray can determine if a battery is present.
- Do not induce vomiting.

For more information on battery safety, please call Safe Kids Pee Dee/Coastal at (843) 777-5021 to speak to an Injury Prevention Specialist or visit [www.McLeodSafeKids.org](http://www.McLeodSafeKids.org).

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