

## Toddler Almost Died Before Simple Source of Illness Discovered



JULIE RYAN EVANS July 28, 2011 at 11:44 AM

PARENTING NEWS

For days, a Maine toddler was in and out of the emergency room and doctors' offices while everyone tried to figure out what was causing his high fever and vomiting. At first doctors said it was the flu, but his parents knew it was something more and pressed doctors to do more as he continued to get worse. Finally they refused to leave the ER until the real source of his illness was discovered.

Turns out that little **Kacen Pedrucci**, 17 months, had swallowed something that we all have in our homes: [a lithium battery](#). They think the one he swallowed came from his favorite talking book, *The Lion King*, but they are everywhere in our homes, from remote controls to watches to toys, and aren't always secured as well as they should be.



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Since that time in May, little Kacen has been through **five surgeries to keep his esophagus from swelling shut**. He still has to use a feeding tube, but fortunately he should be fine. It's terrifying to think how easily he could have died had it not been discovered.

His mother, Kalashai Porter, told the *Sentinel Source*, "There were so many days I just sat by his bedside, watching and wondering if he was going to live."

His story is such an important reminder to us all to secure those batteries -- they're so small, just about the size of a piece of candy, and can easily be swallowed without anyone noticing ... until it's perhaps too late. It's also a reminder of just **how strong of advocates we have to be for our own children's health.**

It would be nice to think doctors have all the answers, but clearly they don't. When the answers they give us don't make sense in our heads or our hearts, it's our responsibility to push them to find out what's really wrong. It's often not easy, and Kacen's mom told NCEN that she felt stupid and like she was making the doctors mad for not believing them, but thank goodness she was strong enough to do so.

**How do you secure lithium batteries in your house? Have you ever had to fight to make doctors see beyond their initial diagnosis?**

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