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Keep Out of Reach: Number of Kids Swallowing Batteries Doubles

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[May 14, 2012](#) Posted by [Elise Marrion](#)



Once babies finally become mobile, watch out – they will put anything in their mouths, ears, and nose.

From household objects to seemingly harmless baby essentials like pacifiers, bottles and sippy cups, children seem to find a way of injuring themselves with just about anything.

According to a study published in *Pediatrics*, button batteries are one of the most dangerous and commonly swallowed items by children. The number of battery-related emergency visits has doubled over the past 20 years.

Button batteries are the coin-shaped batteries commonly used in toys, remote controls and hearing aids. The study attributes the increase in battery swallowing to the popularity of household products that use these batteries and the alluring nature of the small, shiny objects from a child's perspective.

The study reports nearly 66,000 battery-related emergency department visits by children under 18 between 1999 and 2009, with more than 75% of ER visits involving children 5 or younger.

Aside from a choking hazard, if swallowed, the batteries can get stuck in the esophagus and even send an electrical current through the body. The batteries can also leak acid and burn holes into the trachea or esophagus. Researchers say that if the battery becomes lodged in the esophagus, severe injuries could occur in as little as two hours.

Research about swallowing batteries comes on the heels of a potentially lethal trend of children [swallowing magnets](#) that Consumer

Media Network reported in March.


Another study published in [Pediatrics](#) explored the dangers of bottles, pacifiers and sippy cups, which also contributed to the growing number of ER visits over a 20-year period. This study reported two out of every 10,000 babies and toddlers are injured while using bottles, pacifiers and sippy cups, most often falling while holding them and walking.

The moral of the story: do more to baby proof your home than locking up the cleaning products and plugging the outlets. Double check and reinforce the battery compartments of all battery powered items and think about the potential hazard of each and every item within your child's reach.

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