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What moms or would-be-moms need to know about planning, expecting or parenting

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### Dangerous button batteries



The dangers of button batteries, roughly the size of a dime, are back in the news. According to a study just published in the journal *Pediatrics* by a group of researchers from Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH, there were an estimated 5,525 ER visits caused by batteries in 2009, with the majority of them occurring in children under the age of five.

Swallowing a [button battery](#) can cause serious problems if it becomes stuck in the esophagus. (Kids have been known to stick them in their nose or ear where they can be problematic, too.) Lithium, which makes these little batteries more powerful, also makes them more dangerous. If they are surrounded by liquid, they can generate an external current and can release toxic fluid that can burn through tissue and even cause death in as little as two hours. If you suspect that your child might have swallowed a button battery, don't wait but immediately take him to the emergency room to have it removed.

Products designed for children should meet certain standards to ensure batteries cannot be easily removed - such as adding a screw to secure the compartment door. Do the ones in your house meet these standards? Much of the time protections on children's products do not extend to products meant for adults. It's crucial that all of us are proactive - that we search for, identify and secure the button batteries we use.

Here's a list of some of the items you may have in your home, purse, or car that use button batteries (who knew?!) Check these out: toys; wireless game controls; hearing aids; digital thermometers; watches; calculators; fun flashing jewelry and shoes; remote control devices, including the wireless access for your car door; greeting cards; flashlights; digital bathroom scales; laser pointers; back-up for your PC or digital clock; PDA devices; battery operated children's books; glucometers, security tokens; video game cartridges or memory cards; solar/electric candles; bicycle LED head and/or tail lights...

Lock your spare batteries in a cabinet where you also lock poisons or your medications. Make sure you share this information with your friends and family members with young children. And don't forget to tell grandparents who often are out of the loop on things like this but care for your little ones.

Tags: [batteries](#), [button battery](#), [emergency](#), [emergency room](#), [lithium](#), [poison](#)

This entry was posted on Thursday, May 17th, 2012 at 8:58 am and is filed under [Baby](#), [Hot Topics](#), [Mommy](#), [Planning for Baby](#), [Pregnancy](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

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