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## Button Batteries: The Hidden Danger in your Home

by Guest Blogger on [January 13, 2012](#)

### FUNCTIONAL FRIDAYS

*We are thrilled to host Karla Rauch of [Emmett's Fight Foundation](#) today to help spread the word about a common danger we often overlook in our homes. Please read this important post, and share this critical information with the other parents you know. And when you're done, head over to their site for more detailed information, including a video that really hits home with how accessible hazardous materials really are to our children.*

My name is Karla Rauch. I am a wife and mother of two adorable boys. One year ago my husband Michael and I came close to losing our youngest son Emmett to a tragic accident. There was a danger in our home that was unknown to us and, as we have come to learn, to the majority of the parent population. We feel it our mission to help spread awareness to all who will take a moment to listen. We want to educate and encourage others to take action to prevent this senseless accident from happening to another family! **Button batteries** are extremely dangerous and can be deadly!!!

My blue eyed, toe headed boy had just celebrated his 1st birthday. On the morning of October 16, 2010, Emmett came down with a fever and was very

fussy. Michael took him to Urgent Care where we were told that it was just a common cold or flu virus. The next two days Emmett was still feverish, wanted to be held constantly and he had no desire to eat. I kept fighting internally with myself whether or not to take him back in to see the doctor. Was the virus just running its course or was it something more?

Tuesday morning, on our way to the pediatrician's office, Emmett started vomiting up blood. That car ride felt like one of those bad dreams where the wheels kept spinning but I couldn't get to my destination fast enough. The pediatrician immediately sent us to the Emergency Department (ED) to be evaluated. A chest x-ray was taken, and a button battery was discovered, lodged in his esophagus. Within minutes we were in an ambulance headed to Phoenix Children's Hospital (PCH). I could not believe this was happening! I never remembered Emmett choking on anything. The physician explained that the battery was not lodged in his airway which would have caused him to choke; Emmett had tried to swallow the battery, therefore it was stuck in his esophagus. Where did he get this button battery? We discovered a few days later that it came from the remote control to our DVD player.

Emmett was rushed into a 3 hour surgery to remove the button battery. His surgeon, Dr. Craig Egan, came out to show us the blackened battery along with images of Emmett's burnt esophagus. It had burned two holes in his esophagus and into his trachea (airway). The battery had then lodged itself one centimeter above his aorta, just missing his precious heart. Emmett was in critical condition and for 6 days we were not sure if he would survive. It has been a bumpy road but our sweet boy is a fighter and is still embracing each day with courage and strength beyond our understanding.

To this day he has endured: 28 surgical procedures, 4 inches of his esophagus have been removed, a portion of his stomach has been used to reconstruct his esophagus and he had a patch to repair his trachea. He currently has a Trach and is on a ventilator at night. He was in the Pediatric ICU for a total of eight months in 2011. Emmett cannot eat by mouth so he is fed using a G- tube (feeding tube in his tummy). He is susceptible to aspiration due to the damage and has had aspiration induced pneumonia 9 times since July of 2011, resulting in weakened lungs.

Yes, this is a heartbreaking and scary story. I never thought twice about button batteries before this horrific accident happened to my sweet Emmett. **According to the National Poison Control, 3,500 cases of button battery ingestion occurred in 2010.** There have been 11 deaths in the past few years. Phoenix Children's Hospital has seen up to 6 ingestions a month! This is a serious issue and there are so many who are unaware of this "Hidden Danger".

We have started a Non- Profit Foundation called [Emmett's Fight Foundation](#) to educate families and caregivers about the dangers of button batteries. We hope by telling Emmett's story we can save other children's lives. [Emmett's Fight also has a blog](#) . The blog gives updates on Emmett's progress along with helpful safety tips. Button batteries can be found in remote controls, musical greeting cards, key fobs, digital scales, thermometers, toys, hearing aids, T-light candles, watches and many more electronic devices.

Little ones 0-4 years of age are most vulnerable to having severe damage from ingesting button batteries. The diameter of the esophagus in children 4 and under, are just small enough to lodge a coin size battery. When a button battery is ingested, the battery WILL start burning within 2 hours! Please seek medical attention immediately!! Do not be afraid to advocate for your child! Most importantly, please go through your homes and secure all of these batteries with strong tape or glue. Prevent this from happening to your child or any little one in your life! Please spread the word!!!

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Wendy

my God this story breaks my heart. I will share this warning and pray for darling Emmett. Thank you for being so generous & sharing your horrific experience.

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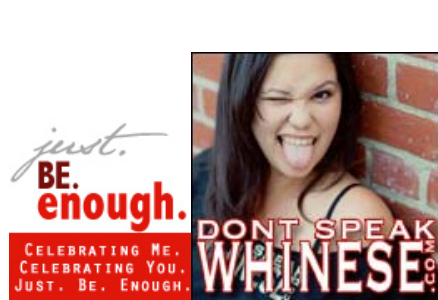
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