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# Prevent Kids From Swallowing Button Batteries



Children 6 and under most at risk for injury

By Children's Health Team | 1/3/13 1:17 p.m.

Parents know toys with small parts can be a choking hazard for young children. But with today's technology comes a new danger: button-size batteries powering toys and electronics.

These are linked to dangerous ingestions:

- Hearing aids (top the list)
- Games and toys
- Flashlights
- Watches
- Laser pointers

## Growing problem

According to a recent study by the National Battery Ingestion Hotline Update, the average number of button-battery ingestions in the United States per month has grown from 30 in 2002 to more than 80 in 2012.

Children age 6 and under are most at risk. December and January are typically the months when the most button-battery ingestions occur.

If they swallow the batteries, children can choke or suffer from internal burns and even severe tissue damage because batteries contain harmful chemicals. Michael Benninger, MD [\[LINK\]](#):

[http://my.clevelandclinic.org/staff\\_directory/staff\\_display.aspx?doctorid=8652](http://my.clevelandclinic.org/staff_directory/staff_display.aspx?doctorid=8652)], says that every year, battery ingestion causes about five deaths “and an innumerable number of surgical procedures for removal or related complications.”

## How to prevent injuries

Dr. Benninger says your best defense against preventing ingestion is to be vigilant. He suggests that parents:

- 1. Dispose of used batteries properly.** “Don’t leave it on the counter or on the floor where a child or a pet can actually get to it,” Dr. Benninger says.
- 2. Check the toys that have batteries.** Know which of your child’s toys have batteries in them and check to be sure they are well-secured.
- 3. Act quickly if your child does swallow a battery.** Dr. Benninger says if your child swallows a button battery, you should call 911 immediately or get the child to an emergency room as quickly as possible.
- 4. Don’t forget pets.** Dr. Benninger says pets are also vulnerable to ingesting batteries, so keep them in mind when you’re handling button batteries.

## More information

**Children’s Health** [[LINK: http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy\\_living/childrens\\_health](http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/childrens_health)]

## Related posts

**Dangerous Magnet Ingestion** [[LINK: http://health.clevelandclinic.org/2012/08/dangerous-magnet-ingestion](http://health.clevelandclinic.org/2012/08/dangerous-magnet-ingestion)]

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