

Toddler died after swallowing three-volt battery from 3D TV glasses which leaked acid in her throat

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A TODDLER swallowed a three-volt battery from 3D television glasses and it became lodged in her throat, corroded and killed her, an inquest heard today.

Francesca Asan picked up the battery from a wrapper for the glasses which her father George had tried to hide.





Francesca's father thought she had food poisoning and was unaware she had swallowed a batteryCredit: Solent News

The two-year-old started vomiting and pointed at her mouth before Mr Asan took her to see a dentist who said she may have teething problems.

After leaving the dentist the youngster's condition worsened and she went 'floppy' in her father's arms which prompted a rush to the hospital where she died hours later, the coroner heard.

Mr Asan, which is originally from Romania, told the North Hampshire Coroner at the inquest in Basingstoke, Hants, that he had taken his daughter to the doctors twice and was told the the problem could be food poisoning and to return if her condition worsened.

Coronor, Andrew Bradley tole the inquest that a post-mortem found a number of blood clots in the toddler's body as well as discharge from the corroded battery in her stomach.

"There was a button battery projected over the upper oesophagus and the margins of the batter were irregular, suggesting a leak," he said.

"There was a small amount of blood clot on the tongue and the pharynx and there was a haemorrhage at the back of the oesophagus.

"There was a corroded round 3v battery two centimetres in diameter present in the oesophagus."

A 500ml blood clot was found in Francesca's stomach along with the discolouring in the oesophagus where the battery had been leaking into the artery at the back of her neck.

Mr Bradley labelled the bleeding as 'catastrophic'.

He added: "Given the size of the battery it is reasonable to suggest symptoms would have developed some time after consumption.

"It is not possible to be more precise.

"Francesca was clean, well cared for and adequately nourished.

"There are no features to suggest neglect or physical abuse.

"There is not an injury to the mouth to suggest this was anything other than accidental ingestion."

Recording a conclusion of misadventure, Mr Bradley gave acute gastrointestinal damage and foreign body in the oesophagus as the cause of Francesca's death.

During the inquest former soldier, Mr Asan said he believed that he didn't do enough to prevent the battery being found by his daughter.

The father-of-six from Basingstoke, Hants, first noticed a problem with Francesca on May 15 when she was sick three times.

He said: "We just put it down to her having food poisoning or a bug.

"We decided to take her to the GP. She woke up in pain and went to nursery on the Wednesday and was not herself.

"Staff at the nursery said she was looking for comforting and cuddles.

"After the GP I called the dentist.

"She fell asleep while we were at the dentist and she woke up in pain and I said 'no more joking around'.

"She was talking normally to us. The dentist suggested it was a teething problem and at that moment I relaxed a little bit.

"I left the dentist with peace of mind and she went floppy.

"I ran home with her and we changed her nappy because it was black.

"I called a taxi and went straight to the hospital."

While in a lift at the Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital, Francesca began to gasp for air and her father shouted for help.

Mr Asan said: "When the put the tube down her throat all the blood came out.

"We have a 3D TV and we have 3D glasses and they came with spare batteries. I thought they were safer in the drawer.

"They are not quite easily accessed by the children but they are silver and not like sweeties.

"Apparently I didn't do enough."



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The coroner said in light of Francesca's death people should be 'aware of these button batteries'. Credit: INS News

Offering his condolences to Mr Asan for the loss of Francesca on May 23, Mr Bradley gave a timely reminder about the dangers of small batteries.

He said: "I share the concerns with these button batteries. They are immediately attractive objects.

"There is an attraction for a two-year-old to pick them off.

"The battery lodged in Francesca's oesophagus and it produced discharge which was the hard lump in her stomach.

"It eroded the oesophagus and into her subclavian artery."

Mr Bradley added by the time Mr Asan found out what position he was in, Francesca was 'beyond redemption'.

He added; "We need to be aware of these button batteries.

"Let's just be extra cautious because Francesca is no longer with us because of these."