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Health News



Dangers of tiny batteries and children

Monday, May 24, 2010



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NEW YORK (WABC) -- A new study suggests children are digesting tiny batteries found in toys.

Working in a pediatric emergency room, Dr. Ruth Borgen has seen plenty of children who have swallowed coins. But lately, there is a new and more dangerous trend.

Children swallowing so-called 'button batteries'.

"Don't leave them lying around. If you are done with them, don't discard it in a place your child can get it," said Dr. Borgen, with Hackensack University Medical Center.

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The 20 millimeter lithium batteries are typically used in hearing aids, remote controls, calculators and even some games and toys.

An article published Monday in the Journal Pediatrics says that more severe injuries, and even deaths, are resulting from children swallowing these batteries.

"When the battery is lodged in the esophagus it sits there for a long time, it causes necrosis and breakdown and you can get a hole in the esophagus," adds Dr. Borgen.

The batteries are about the size of a nickel or penny. Children under the age of six are most at risk.

"They're small and shiny and tempting for a kid," said Tawana Smith.

The study showed that of the children swallowing the button batteries, 62 percent got the batteries out a toy or device, 30 percent got them out of the trash, and 8 percent got them out of the package.

Experts say if you are using these batteries in your home, make sure the covers are secured, and don't throw them out in a trash can your child could reach.

Battery Types

Cr 2032

Cr 2025

Cr 2016

National Battery Ingestion Hotline


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