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Button batteries are killing our children

May 24, 5:36 PM Grand Rapids Public Health Examiner Nancy Zielinski

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They run our watches, calculators, remote controls, singing greeting cards, thermometers, and our DVD players. We like them because they have a long shelf life and they can be used for outdoor products. I'm talking about those little "button batteries" the size of a coin and found in a multitude of household products we can't live without. And they're killing our children and causing serious injury.

The results of two new studies on the hazards of button batteries will appear in the June issue of *Pediatrics*. Findings will show the batteries end up in the mouths of children, particularly those under four years of age, lodging in the esophagus causing choking accidents, and alkaline burns that may be potentially fatal.

In over half of the cases reported involved children under age six swallowing batteries they removed from a consumer product. Experts say some responsibility should be placed on the consumer electronics industry to build a more secure battery compartment to make it harder for children to get access to the battery.

According to Dr. Toby Litovitz, director of the National Capital Poison Center in Washington, D.C., and colleagues at George Washington University School of Medicine. the University of



