



TINY BUT DANGEROUS

**BITE-SIZED BATTERIES
AND STRONG MAGNETS
HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT**



Advisory from the NJ Poison Control Center

Swallowing button batteries or strong magnets is a **medical emergency**



Some common household items may be small, but they pose a sizable injury risk for crawling infants, young children, and pets.

Seemingly harmless items including watches, toys, electronics, key fobs, hearing aids, digital thermometers, and singing greeting cards contain “bite-sized” batteries that can cause serious, even deadly injuries if swallowed or placed in the nose or ear.

Like many other items found at home, lithium batteries (also called button or coin batteries) are also a choking hazard.

1-800-222-1222





Most parents and caregivers are unaware that the toys and everyday items their young children come in contact with contain these potentially dangerous batteries.

Diane Calello
Executive and Medical Director
[New Jersey Poison Control Center](#)
[Rutgers New Jersey Medical School](#)

“It does not take very long for a battery to begin to cause serious injury once it gets stuck inside the body. Internal chemical burns can result quickly, producing serious, even permanent damage to the esophagus and other internal organs,” says Calello. Even “dead” batteries cause injury.



Last year in 2023, the New Jersey Poison Control Center's medical providers were consulted on the management of **38 children** and **17 adults** who swallowed button batteries.



Along with batteries, strong magnets found in toys can also cause devastating, internal damage if swallowed.

In the same year, the center's providers were consulted on **56 children** and **4 adults** who swallowed magnets.

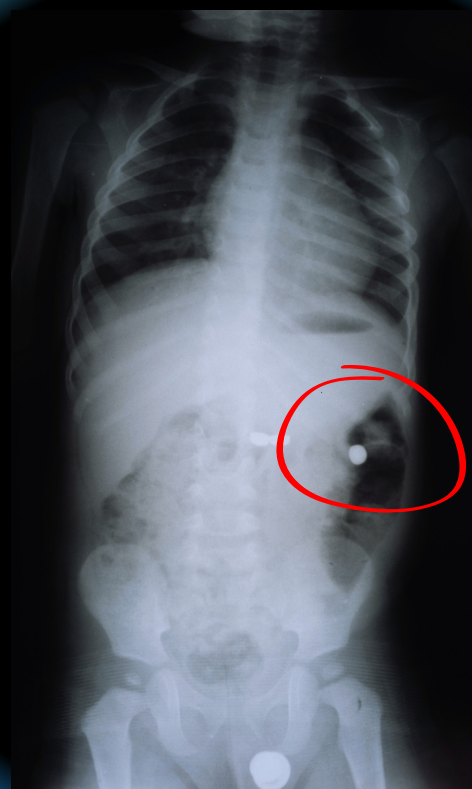
1-800-222-1222



PREVENT ACCIDENTAL INGESTIONS

“Not only are magnets a choking hazard, but if two or more magnets are swallowed together, they can attract one another inside the body, causing a blockage or twist in the intestines,” says Calello.

“A single magnet may pass through just fine, but two or more is likely to lead to serious injury.”



For further information, read Dr. Calello's interview with [WebMD](#).

It is important to take notice of home items that are missing small batteries or magnets. This could be the first indication that a young child or pet has swallowed such items.

Pets are curious just like young children. It's easy for them to swallow small batteries or magnets from an item left around the home.



PETS ARE AT RISK TOO

Pets can also suffer the same serious and fatal health consequences. If you think your pet has swallowed a battery or magnet, call your veterinarian or local animal hospital immediately for the next steps. Ingesting these items is a medical emergency for pets too.



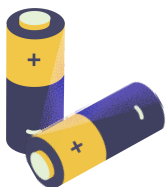
EVEN DEAD BATTERIES CAN CAUSE SERIOUS INJURY

“Whether you see your child swallow any of these items or suspect he or she did, immediate medical attention is required,” says Calello.

“Do not wait for symptoms to develop, irreversible damage may have occurred by the time signs appear. This was the case a few years ago in New Jersey when a young child died after ingesting a button battery.”

IT'S FAR EASIER TO PREVENT A TRAGEDY THAN TO TREAT ONE

SAFETY TIPS TO PREVENT ACCIDENTAL INGESTIONS



Check battery compartments

of common household items to make sure the compartment is closed tightly. You can put a piece of tape over the compartment to help keep it closed.



If battery compartments are not secured

by screws, prevent children or pets from having access to those items. The same goes for items containing magnets.



Store spare batteries like medicine —

up high and out of sight and reach. Keeping them in a locked area is safest.



Immediately throw out “dead” batteries

but make sure children and pets can't find them in the garbage. Dead batteries still have enough charge to burn through internal tissue, causing considerable damage.



Batteries and magnets are accidentally ingested

by adults too. Do not put them in your mouth for any reason because saliva makes them slippery and easy to swallow.

1-800-222-1222



**New
Jersey
Poison
Center**



[NJPoisonCenter.org](https://www.njpoisoncenter.org)

24/7

**Get Free
Medical Help
1-800-222-1222**

Medical specialists are available to provide information, answer questions, and provide emergency support 24 hours a day

Anyone can call for medical help – children, teens, and adults

NJ Poison Control Center

is a medical resource for both the public and healthcare providers.

If you think someone swallowed a button battery or magnet, contact the New Jersey Poison Control Center immediately for medical treatment advice.

Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or [Chat Here](https://www.njpoisoncenter.org)

If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1