

Child Health and Safety

Newsletter...Button Battery Awareness

This newsletter is designed to raise awareness of the work of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

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Christmas seems to get earlier every year, but when it comes to child safety, earlier definitely means better. Why? Just look at the image below:



The burning effect of a button battery when placed between slices of ordinary ham, simulating a child's throat.

Button batteries are the small, round batteries you find in a growing number of toys and everyday objects like remote control and car key fobs. They can be extremely dangerous for children if swallowed.

.....Surgeons warn they should be treated like poison and kept out of reach of children. The risk escalates in the lead up to Christmas when flashing and musical Santa hats, Christmas cards and decorations flood the market.

Lithium batteries react with saliva so that they leak acid within as little as an hour. If a child swallows a battery it can cause severe trauma, such as burning a hole in their throat or stomach or further damage to other internal organs, or even death.



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No obvious symptoms:

Unfortunately it may not be obvious that a button battery is stuck in a child's throat. There are no specific symptoms associated with this. They may appear to have a stomach upset or a virus. Symptoms may include: tiredness, loss of appetite, pain or nausea.

What you can do :

Make sure that toys and other products using button cell batteries, such as small electronic devices, have lockable battery compartments. This should mean that they are safe for children to use as the batteries are locked away.

Be extra vigilant with items including musical greeting cards, frameless candles and remote controls as they do not have lockable compartments. RoSPA advises that children should not be allowed to have access to these products if the battery compartment is not secure.

It is a good idea to ensure that spare batteries are locked away, and used batteries are disposed of correctly.



What should I do if my child swallows a button battery?

Seek medical advice immediately. Take them straight to the emergency department at your local hospital or dial 999 for an ambulance. Advise medics straight away that you think a button battery has been swallowed

Do not let them eat or drink

Do not make them sick

Trust your instincts and act fast – do not wait to see if any symptoms develop

Remember that the saliva in their body will react with the battery and so time is very much of the essence in these cases.



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For Further CDOP information :

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