

# Hearing Aid Battery Safety Information

Information for patients,  
parents and carers



Leeds children's  
hospital

caring about children

This leaflet explains the importance of storing hearing aid batteries safely and the action to take in the unlikely event a battery is swallowed.

## Hearing Aid Battery Safety Information

Button batteries are small, round batteries that come in many different sizes and types. Lithium button batteries are the ones used in hearing aids and are the most powerful. If a lithium coin cell battery gets stuck in a child's food pipe, it can cause catastrophic internal bleeding and death within hours of being swallowed.

It is therefore important to keep all spare and 'dead' hearing aid batteries and any objects with easily accessible lithium coin cell batteries out of children's reach, and to act fast if you think your child may have swallowed one.

Children most at risk are between 1 and 5 years, but younger and older children can also be at risk.

## What happens if my child swallows a battery?

In our experience, it is very rare for children to swallow batteries. But if a button battery - particularly a lithium coin cell battery - gets stuck in the food pipe, energy from the battery can react with saliva to make the body create caustic soda. This is the same chemical used to unblock drains! This can burn a hole through the food pipe and can lead to catastrophic internal bleeding and death. The reaction can happen in as little as two hours.

Button batteries are also dangerous if they get stuck in a child's nose or ear.

If your child accidentally swallows a battery, please take them to Accident and Emergency immediately. It is important that they are treated as a medical emergency.

- Take them straight to the A&E department at your local hospital or dial 999 for an ambulance.
- Tell the doctor that you think your child has swallowed a button battery.
- If you have the battery packaging or the product powered by the battery, take it with you. This will help the doctor identify the type of battery and make treatment easier.
- Do not let your child eat or drink.
- Do not make them sick.
- Trust your instincts and act fast - do not wait to see if any symptoms develop.

## Prevention

To prevent a battery from being accidentally swallowed, keep batteries out of reach of children. All children under the age of 5 should be fitted with a tamper resistant battery door on their hearing aids. These can also be supplied to older children if you feel that your child (including a sibling of the child with hearing aids) may be at risk of swallowing a battery. The tamper resistant door will make it more difficult for the child to be able to remove the battery from the hearing aid.

- Keep all spare batteries in a sealed container in a high cupboard.

- Get a tamper resistant battery door fitted.
- Put 'flat' or 'dead' batteries out of children's reach straight away and recycle them safely and as quickly as possible.
- Teach older children that button batteries are dangerous and not to play with them or give them to younger brothers and sisters.

## To have a tamper resistant battery door fitted please contact us

- By phone: **0113 392 2484**
- Or by email: **leedsth-tr.hearingandbalance@nhs.net**
- Or contact your teacher of the deaf who will be able to change the battery door for you.

Please follow this link for further information in regard battery safety <https://www.capt.org.uk/button-batteries>



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