

Swallowed Magnets in Children

Information for parents and carers



leeds children's
hospital

caring about children

Recently, a different type of magnet (also known as Neo magnet, Bucky balls, Magnet balls or Super Strong Rare-Earth Magnets) has gone on sale.

They are most often sold as 'adult desk toys, stress relievers or brain development toys' and it not legal to sell them to children less than 14 years of age.

They are between seven and fourteen times stronger than traditional magnets and are sometimes called super strong or powerful magnets. They can be a variety of shapes, most often balls or discs.

Today, your child has been discharged after swallowing a magnet. Even though the magnet has not passed through them yet, it is OK to take your child home.

After going home, your child will need a follow up X-ray 6-12 hours later and you should have been given a time to re attend the Emergency Department.

This follow up X-ray is extremely important so doctors can make sure the magnet is moving normally through your child's bowels.

Until your child has had their repeat X-ray, remove any other external magnetic objects nearby and avoid clothes with metallic buttons or belts with buckle.

There is no need to examine your child's faeces to find the swallowed object. If a single magnet is ingested, it can be expected to be passed spontaneously if the magnet is not too large.

Very rarely, the object can become stuck in the stomach or intestines. Take your child to the Emergency Department **IMMEDIATELY** if they have:

- Concerns of further magnet or foreign body ingestion
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (tummy) pain
- Blood in their vomit or poo
- A fever
- You have concerns about a change in your child's eating patterns e.g. refusing food or fluids.



If you need to contact the paediatric emergency department prior to your review please contact:

0113 392 5548



When you arrive for your repeat X-ray, please book in at emergency department reception then go directly to emergency department X-ray between times:

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