

## Wellness Articles

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## Swallowing button batteries is dangerous

Button batteries are used to power items such as watches, cameras, calculators, hearing aids, and computer games. With Christmas around the corner, many children may receive gifts powered by button batteries and because of what they look like and their size, children can mistake button batteries for food or candy.

Swallowing button batteries is dangerous. Button batteries can cause chemical burns and damage your internal organs.

If your child swallows a button battery, it can cause burning, corrosion, or completely destroy the tissue in the upper digestive tract. This damage can happen very quickly and is likely to be worse if the battery gets stuck in the esophagus (throat) instead of moving into the stomach.

After ingesting a button battery your child might have one or more of these symptoms:

- trouble breathing
- wheezing, drooling
- coughing and gagging when eating
- trouble swallowing
- chest pain
- belly pain
- nausea, vomiting
- no appetite
- fever

There may not be any symptoms after swallowing a button battery, but injury can still occur.

If you think someone has swallowed a button battery:

- Do not try to make them vomit.
- Take them to an emergency department immediately.

To keep children safe this holiday season and beyond:

- Keep all batteries locked up, out of reach and out of sight of children.
- Supervise children when they use products containing button batteries.
- Ensure children do not play with button batteries or are able to remove them from toys.
- Look for loose batteries on floors, tables, and counters. Dispose of batteries so that children cannot find them.
- Store or dispose of batteries in a secure place so that children cannot gain access to them.
  - Cover the ends of the battery with tape before storing and disposing.
  - Ensure button batteries are not left out, even if they are dead.

Visit [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](http://MyHealth.Alberta.ca) to learn more about button batteries, the signs and symptoms of button battery ingestion, as well as treatment.