



 Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

Battery Ingestion Treatment

Self-Care at Home

The most prudent home treatment for someone who has swallowed a disk battery is to give nothing by mouth and to go to the nearest hospital emergency department. If it will not delay going to the emergency department, bring a sample of the battery ingested. All disk batteries contain an imprinted code that can be used to identify manufacturer, the battery's actual size, and its contents.

- If no battery can be found, then bring the device from which the battery was removed.
- The National Button Battery Ingestion Hotline (202) 625-3333 may be consulted for battery identification and emergency instructions.
- Although antacids helped to prevent disk batteries from leaking in animal models, the dosage required in children would be too much. Avoid medicines like ipecac, which promote vomiting. Batteries that have safely passed into the stomach can be forced back into the esophagus.

Medical Treatment

Immediate removal of the battery may be indicated in the following cases:

- If X-rays show the battery is located in the esophagus (food pipe).
- If the person develops symptoms such as abdominal pain or vomiting blood: Minor changes in stool color or minor vomiting are not indications for removal.
- If the battery is large (15.6 mm or bigger) and the child is younger than 6 years and the battery does not pass through the stomach within 48 hours.

Battery removal will likely be accomplished with an endoscope. An endoscope is a flexible fiber optic scope with ports for grasping devices to be passed through it. This scope is passed through the mouth and into the esophagus and stomach.

- Endoscopy allows for battery removal and visual inspection of the esophagus for damage. If an endoscope is not available, removal by other means may be attempted.
- Transit time for disk batteries through the digestive tract ranges from 12 hours to 14 days. The majority (85.4%) of cells are passed in the stool within 72 hours. At home, strain stools for passage of the battery
- Infrequent abdominal x-rays should be taken to confirm forward progression of the battery.
- If the battery contains mercury and is found to have fragmented (viewed by an x-ray), blood and urine mercury levels are necessary. Medication to lower mercury levels should be used only when abnormal levels are found.

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For more information, read the complete article, Battery Ingestion

(<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=58824>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

WebMD Medical Reference from eMedicineHealth

Reviewed by Ann Edmundson, MD on May 24, 2006

Last updated: May 24, 2006

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