

KIDS SWALLOW THE MOST AMAZING THINGS

Because young children like to explore their environment and put things in their mouths, they often swallow small objects and liquids that can be hazardous to their health.*

Common items that are swallowed:

Commonly swallowed objects include coins (most common), small toys, jewelry, pebbles and button batteries**. Liquids commonly swallowed include such as cleaning products, hair relaxants, pesticides, and car products.

Signs and symptoms that your child swallowed something:

Because you may not always witness your child swallowing, look for these signs:

- An empty or open container , missing object
- Your child may gag/choke/cough, vomiting, difficulty swallowing, drooling, refuse to eat, complain of chest pain, have breathing difficulty, noisy breathing
- Seeing a residue around your child's mouth or hands
- Burns on your child's lips

Prevention

- Childproof your home: keep cabinets locked, store dangerous products on high shelves, keep floors clean of any items that a small child may try to eat.
- Close monitoring of infants and toddlers
- Do **not** take things out of their original container and put them in another container
- Educate the entire family including grandparents
- Have the number for Poison Control readily available **1-800-222-1222**

What you should do if you suspect you child swallowed something

- Stay as calm as possible - your child will be more scared and panicked if you are
- Don't give your child anything to eat or drink if you know or suspect they've swallowed anything until you have spoken to an expert
- If you have any idea at all what they swallowed, call poison control (directions on the bottle) *different chemicals are treated differently based on their composition*
- If your child has breathing problems or is difficult to arouse, cal 911 immediately

Complications

- Death
- Aspiration into the lungs
- Burns and damage to the lining of the esophagus
- Narrowed areas in the esophagus that require frequent procedures to stretch them out

Treatment

Treatment depends on what is swallowed. Some objects can pass through the digestive tract on their own. Others will need to be taken out by surgery or endoscopy.

* Even though these occur more commonly in children between crawling age and 5 years old, they can occur at any age. ** Button batteries can cause severe damage after the first hour.

PREVENTION



- ❖ Have the number to Poison Control on every phone in your house and on your cell phone **1-800-222-1222**
- ❖ Childproof your home. Start by looking at each room of your house at your child's eye level. Get down on your hands and knees to do this.
- ❖ Store hazardous items **out of children's reach**. Lock cabinets and drawers.



These include anything that a child may put in his or her mouth: Medications, vitamins, cleaning products, office products and hygiene products.

- ❖ Buy products in child-resistant packaging (this does **not** mean child-proof)
- ❖ **Never** transfer products from their original container into another container (even if you label the new container).
- ❖ Labels are great, but young children **can't** read. They may think a household cleaner is a beverage like juice.
- ❖ Closely supervise all small children. Always be alert to what your children are doing. It only takes a few seconds for something dangerous to happen.
- ❖ Put products back as soon as you use them. Don't leave them unattended to answer the door or the phone.
- ❖ Discard old and outdated products.
- ❖ Keep trash out of the reach of small children.
- ❖ Keep floors free of any objects that a child may put in his or her mouth. Also keep purses, diaper bags and suitcases off the floor.
- ❖ Check for warning labels on toys. Choose large toys without detachable parts for children under 3 years of age. Be cautious with your pet's toys also.
- ❖ Inspect toys regularly for damaged and broken parts. Get rid of unsafe toys.
- ❖ Set a good example for your children and don't put things like pens, sewing needles, bottle tops and other objects in your mouth while they are watching.
- ❖ Buy Ipecac syrup, but use it only under the advice of Poison control or a physician.
- ❖ Be careful when visiting others or when others are visiting you. A change in your normal routine leads to a higher risk of accidents happening.
- ❖ Educate your children and every caretaker including babysitters, grandparents and aunts and uncles about poisons and accident prevention.
- ❖ Take a CPR and first aid class (check with your local American Red Cross

**Be Proactive before you have to be Reactive.
Accidents are preventable!**