

# **Helping Hand™**

## **Button Battery Safety**

More and more household items have button batteries (Picture 1). These items include: remote controls, thermometers, games, toys, hearing aids, calculators, bathroom scales, musical greeting cards, key fobs, electronic jewelry, holiday ornaments, cameras, and candles. As technology advances, so do the items and equipment we use every day – and so do the batteries that power many of these things.



Picture 1 Items with button batteries

Button batteries are small (Picture 2). They may be the size of a pill or a coin. Since they are small, they are easy to swallow or put in the nose or ear. When a button battery is placed in the body it lets off an electrical current that begins to burn the body. Serious injury can occur in as little as 2 hours. If the injury is very severe major surgery may be necessary. People have died from burns caused by swallowing button batteries.

#### What to Look for

**Picture 2** Button batteries the size of a dime

If your child swallows a button battery, he or she may have the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Irritability

- Not wanting to eat or drink
- Throat pain
- Vomiting

If your child puts a button battery in his or her nose or ear, look for the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Irritability

- Fluid drainage coming from ears or nose
- Pain or swelling around the ears or nose

Sometimes there are no symptoms.

#### What to Do

If you think your child has swallowed or put a button battery in his or her nose or ear: **GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM IMMEDIATELY**. You can also call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222. Do **NOT** make the person vomit or let him or her eat or drink. Your child will usually get an X-ray to confirm that the battery is in the body. If a battery is stuck in the body, getting it out is the only way to stop further injury.

### Staying Safe

- Look for every battery-powered device in and around your home and where your children stay. Make sure that the battery is secured, only accessible using a tool, such as a screwdriver. If this is not an option, keep electronic devices well out of the sight and reach of children.
- Keep loose batteries out of the sight and reach of children and store them in a locked cabinet or container.
- Watch children carefully while they are using devices that contain batteries.
- Act fast if you suspect your child has placed a battery inside his or her body. Go IMMEDIATELY to the nearest Emergency Department.
- Share this information with other people, so everyone can stay safe.

## Other Helping Hands

Poisonings and Poison Prevention, HH-IV-30 Choking: Safety and Prevention, HH-IV-99 Medicine Safety, HH-V-157 Home Safety for Infants and Toddlers, HH-IV-73