

Poison Prevention Press

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Text, Save, Share

Everyone should have the phone number for the poison center saved in your mobile phone. You never know when you will need to call. Fumbling around searching for the number can add more stress to an already stressful situation. Follow these steps to save the number today:

- **TEXT** "poison" to 797979
- **SAVE** the poison control vCard into your smartphone
- **Share** the contact with 3 friends

It's that simple!

Calling 1-800-222-1222 anywhere in the U.S. will connect you directly with pharmacists and/or nurses ready to help with poisoning and overdoses.

You will get the right answer, right away.

Call anytime day or night.

Your call is confidential.

Did you know that...

- Nationwide in 2015, button batteries were the #2 cause of death reported by poison centers in children <6 years
- In 2016, the MPC managed 28 cases involving a button battery; 18 in children <6 years

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Household Objects and Substances

Did you know the Maryland Poison Center (MPC) manages calls about people swallowing objects and substances in and around the house? It is probably not surprising that these calls are common in young children. More surprising is these calls are also common in children 6-12 years. Calls about teens, adults and older adults swallowing objects come into the MPC as well, but in lower numbers. What are these objects and substances that people swallow and are they dangerous?

Potentially Dangerous Objects...Call the MPC right away

Magnets: If someone swallows a single magnet, it is no different than other small objects discussed below. But if someone swallows more than one magnet, this is a potentially dangerous situation. As the magnets pass through the intestines, they can attract to one another in different areas. The piece of intestine pinched between the magnets can "die" and even cause a small hole.

Button batteries: These tiny batteries can easily be swallowed by a small child without a parent realizing. If the battery gets stuck in the esophagus, the moist environment completes a circuit. This causes an electrical current that can cause a burn. If the battery is not removed, the burn can turn into a hole in the esophagus.

Coins: In young children, coins of all sizes could get stuck in the esophagus.

Less Dangerous Objects and Substances: The following objects and substances should cause few harmful effects. Some are choking hazards, others may cause illness. Because all cases are different, calling the poison center may to make sure everything is okay is still advised.

- **Miscellaneous objects:** Small items like paper clips, earrings, nails, safety pins, household batteries, etc. should pass through the body without causing harm.
- **Toys:** Age labels warn parents of small parts. A child who is younger than the labeled age could still choke on the toy or a broken piece even if they are smart enough to use the toy.
- **Desiccants or silica gel:** Small packets in shoeboxes, purses, medicine, etc. contain super heated sand and are non-toxic despite the stern warning of "Do Not Eat."
- **Glow products:** The glowing liquid tastes bad, but is not harmful. Call the poison center about eye exposures. Permanent damage is not expected if correct steps are taken right away.
- **Glass:** Small pieces should pass through the body causing no harm.
- **Poop:** While this is gross to most parents, this is generally not harmful. Poop from people or animals that have certain bacteria or viruses can cause illness.
- **Kitty litter:** There are many types of kitty litter. Some more harmful if swallowed than others. Check in with the MPC for specific information
- **Dirt:** By itself, dirt is not a problem. If a pesticide or fertilizer was recently applied, call the poison center for advice.