



Department of Audiology and Hearing Therapy **HEARING AID BATTERY SAFETY**

Button batteries can cause serious harm and death in as little as two hours if swallowed, and can cause serious injuries if they become lodged in the nose or ear. Please follow the advice below.

If a battery is swallowed

If you suspect your child or relative has swallowed a button battery (even if the battery is thought to be 'dead' or 'flat'):

- **Take them straight to your nearest Emergency Department or dial 999 for an ambulance.**
- Tell the hospital staff there that you think your child/relative has swallowed a button battery.
- Let the hospital staff know what type of battery has been swallowed and how long ago.
- Take a similar battery and the packaging with you. This will help the doctor identify the type of battery swallowed and make treatment easier.
- Do not let your child/relative eat or drink.
- Do not make them sick.
- Trust your instincts and act fast – do not wait to see if any symptoms develop.
- Symptoms may not be obvious; therefore it is important to be vigilant.

How can I keep my hearing aid batteries safe?

Storing and using batteries:

- Keep new/spare batteries in their original blister packaging in a sealed container and out of the sight and reach of children and vulnerable adults.
- When opening the battery package, take care to ensure they do not fall on the floor.
- Place 'flat' or 'dead' batteries out of children's reach straight away. It is good practice to keep used batteries in the original packaging to help ensure no old batteries have gone missing.
- Recycle batteries safely and as quickly as possible. Many local councils have recycling schemes for batteries including household collection. Alternatively, many large stores have recycling schemes, or used batteries can be returned to the audiology service.
- Batteries should not touch each other when being stored. If they still have power, they can become hot if they touch, resulting in a fire risk.

- Batteries have occasionally been mistaken for pills. Therefore patients should check their medicine carefully before swallowing any pills, and batteries should be kept in a different place from medicines.

Batteries and young children:

- You can ask your audiologist to fit a childproof battery lock to the hearing aids if you are concerned.
- Keep hearing aids (even those fitted with childproof battery locks) out of the sight and reach of young children when not in use.
- Teach older children that button batteries are dangerous and not to play with them or give them to younger brothers and sisters.
- Try not to let young children see batteries being changed, as it is safer if they do not know the battery compartment opens.

Keep all new and used batteries out of the reach of children.

Contact Numbers:

We hope that you have found this information useful. If you have any questions or are worried about anything, please telephone the Audiology staff at Dorset County Hospital:

Audiology Department: 01305 255563

Useful Websites:

Child Accident Prevention Trust: <https://www.capt.org.uk/button-batteries>

Office for Product Safety & Standards – Button batteries campaign: how to stay safe (June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/button-batteries-campaign-how-to-stay-safe>

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk



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