



BUTTON BATTERIES

Serious injury leading to death can occur in less than 2 hours when young children swallow or insert button batteries.

Symptoms caused by swallowing or inserting button batteries are often **non-specific** and can **mimic** common conditions when they become lodged in the GI tract, nose or ears.

Extra vigilance is urged in children under 6 years especially pre-verbal toddlers under 3 years.

Potential battery exposure should be considered in patients with:

- **Persistent or atypical croup**
a lodged battery can cause laryngeal oedema that mimics croup
- **Chest pain**
- **Unexplained food refusal**
- **Unexplained GI bleeding**
melaena/haematemesis can precede aortic perforation
- **Epistaxis**
oesophageal bleeding may exit via the nose
- **Regurgitation or drooling**
- **Vomiting without fever or diarrhoea**
child may still vomit with battery lodged in oesophagus
- **Fever**
a late sign that may indicate oesophageal perforation
- **Unexplained nasal/ear or vaginal/rectal bleeding or discharge caused by insertion**