



A Minute of Health with CDC

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Gastrointestinal Injuries from Magnet Ingestion in Children – United States, 2003-2006

This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

It's a predictable childhood hazard – children swallowing something that was never meant to be eaten. Caregivers have been taught that if objects are small, smooth, and intact, they usually will pass through a child's digestive system without health consequences. But since 2003, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has identified one death and 19 cases of serious injury caused by swallowing small, powerful magnets – the kind found in many toys and common household items.

These magnets present a special hazard. If one is swallowed, it can attach itself to another, or to any swallowed metal object, and trap tissues or obstruct the digestive system.

Caregivers should keep small magnets away from children, and understand the unique risks if a magnet is swallowed. If you suspect a child has swallowed a magnet, seek health care immediately. Delays in diagnosis and treatment can lead to serious, even fatal outcomes.

Be sure to join us next week on *A Minute of Health with CDC*.

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