

Choking and Suffocation

December 2020

If children don't have their back teeth (molars) yet, they can't chew and grind food down properly.

- ✔ Grate or mash hard fruits and vegetables and cut meat into small pieces before feeding it to young children.
- ✘ Don't feed young children small or hard foods which they can choke on such as nuts, popcorn, corn chips, whole grapes or lollies.
- ✔ Watch your child while they are eating and make sure they sit down to eat. If your child is choking they can't call out to you so you need to be there to watch them.



Children will put anything in their mouth.

- ✔ Keep small objects around the house like marbles, building blocks, batteries and loose coins out of reach so they can't choke on them.

Button batteries are very dangerous and can get stuck in a child's throat without blocking their airway. You may not even know that it's in there.

Button batteries can burn holes inside the body which can cause death.

If a button battery gets stuck then your child may have flu like symptoms and will need to go to hospital quickly.

If you think your child has swallowed a button battery, do not wait for symptoms to show, **call the POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE urgently on 13 11 26.**



Make sure there are no loose or dangling curtain or blind cords near your child's cot or areas where they might be crawling or playing.

Young children can get tangled in the cords and strangle themselves.

✔ Tie up loose curtain or blind cords out of reach of children, at least 1.5 metres above floor level.



Safety checklist to prevent choking and suffocation

- Do you always watch your child when they are eating?
- Do your children sit down to eat?
- Are all small toys that young children could put in their mouth stored out of reach?
- Do you keep older children's toys out of reach of young children?
- Have you checked all blind and curtain cords and made sure they are well away from children?
- Have you checked your home for button batteries and items that may use them?
- Have you entered the phone number of the **Poisons Information Centre** into your mobile phone? 13 11 26

For more information, contact:

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