

# Care after a child swallows a magnet

## Children's Emergency Department

Last reviewed: January 2025

Next review: January 2028

Information for Patients and Carers

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### Introduction

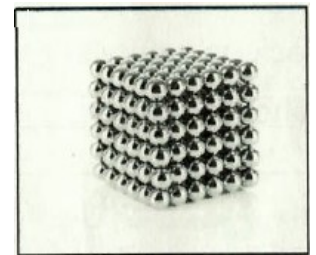
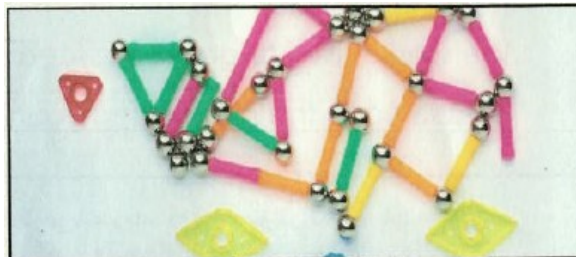
Your child has been seen today in the Emergency Department as they have swallowed a magnet. Even though it is still inside the body, hospital staff have decided that they are well enough to go home but that you may need a further follow up. This leaflet will give you further information about your care.

### Why are magnets dangerous if swallowed?

Recently, a different type of magnet (also known as neo magnet, bucky balls, magnet balls or Super Strong Rare-Earth Magnets) has gone on sale. They are most often sold as 'adult desk toys, stress relievers or brain development toys'. It is illegal to sell them to children under the age of 14.

They are between 7 and 14 times stronger than traditional magnets. They are sometimes called super strong or powerful magnets. They come in a variety of shapes, most often balls or discs. Some examples of what they look like are shown below.

If more than 1 of these is swallowed, or it is swallowed with another metal object, it can lead to damage to the internal organs.



**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)



## Will my child need further tests?

They will need a follow-up X-ray, 6 to 12 hours after going home. This follow-up X-ray is very important. We need to make sure that the magnet is moving normally through the bowel.

Until they have this repeat X-ray, remove any external magnetic objects so they are not close to you. Avoid clothes with metal buttons or metal buckles. You do not need to check the poo to try to find the magnet.

**The follow-up X-ray is: Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please return to the Children's Emergency Department where we will be expecting you.**

## What should I look out for?

Return to the Emergency Department immediately if you:

- have concerns that further magnets or dangerous objects may have been swallowed
- are being sick (vomiting)
- see blood in the vomit or poo
- have tummy (abdominal) pain
- have a fever
- have concerns about a change in a child's eating patterns such as not wanting to eat or drink

## Contact details

If you have any concerns you can contact the NHS helpline on 111 for advice.

## Giving us your feedback

We would love to get some feedback on your visit today. Use your smart phone to scan this QR code for quick access to our online feedback survey form.

Or, you can access the feedback form from our website:

<https://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/thinking-of-choosing-us/patient-experience/>



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على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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