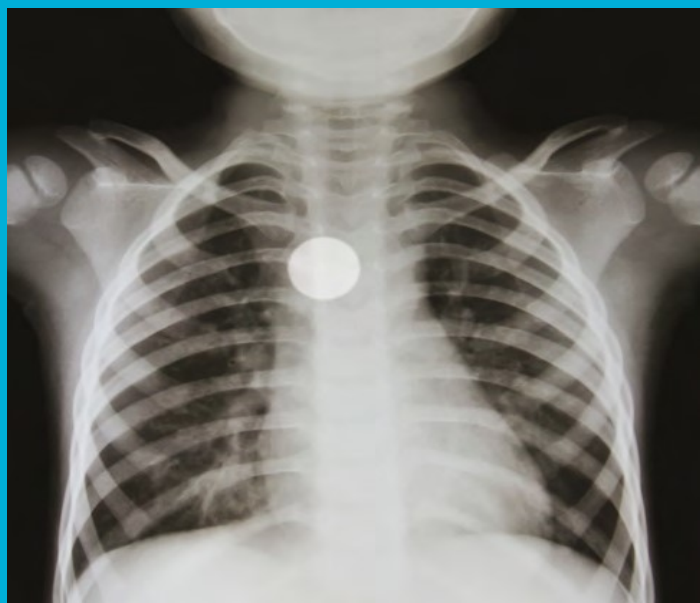


Clinical Learning Case

December 2019

UNDETECTED BUTTON AND COIN CELL BATTERY INGESTION IN CHILDREN



3 YEAR OLD GIRL DIED FROM A CATASTROPHIC HAEMORRHAGE AFTER AN UNWITNESSED INGESTION OF A COIN CELL BATTERY

Learning Points:

- Button and coin cell batteries can lodge in the oesophagus of young children causing serious harm or death due to a chemical reaction which erodes tissue
- **Children <5** are the highest risk of injury as a result of swallowed coin cell batteries, due to their tendency to put things in their mouths and their inability to articulate their actions. 3V lithium coin cell batteries pose the highest risk.
- **More than 50%** of serious outcomes due to button and coin cell battery ingestion occur after an **unwitnessed ingestion**, in which case there is likely to be a delay in recognition and diagnosis
- Children can present with persistent non specific symptoms as well as bleeding (haematemesis/ haemoptysis) and respiratory symptoms

For more information, please see [Investigation into undetected button/coin cell battery ingestion in children](#) and [Child accident prevention trust safety advice](#)