



The official fundraising arm of the  
Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital.

Our aim is to provide information that will help you understand  
your child's injury and enable the appropriate after-care.

There are lots of useful injury leaflets to download at the Royal  
Alexandra website; use the QR code below or follow the link:  
[www.bsuh.nhs.uk/alex/services/accident-and-emergency/](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/alex/services/accident-and-emergency/)



**Useful numbers:**

NHS 111 - 24hr advice line

Practice Plus (Brighton walk-in Centre) 0333 321 0946

Practice Plus GP - 0300 130 3333

8am/8pm - 7 days a week



Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no  
way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.  
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University Hospitals Sussex  
NHS Foundation Trust

the  
alex

Children's Emergency Department



Swallowed foreign object

Information for parents, carers & relatives

## Swallowed foreign objects

Most swallowed foreign objects are harmless and pass through the oesophagus, stomach and bowels (digestive tract) uneventfully.

Sometimes, swallowed objects get stuck in the oesophagus and may need to be removed in hospital.

## Metal detection

Most metal objects can be located using a small hand-held metal detector.

Metal detection is a harmless, non-painful way of locating a small metal swallowed object such as a coin.

The doctor or nurse seeing your child will make the decision to use metal detection based on what your child has swallowed.



Hand held metal detector

## Hazardous objects

- Button batteries and other batteries
- Magnets
- Sharp objects longer than 6cm or wider than 2cm
- Filled balloons

If your child has swallowed any of the above they will need an x-ray and the object may need to be removed by a surgical procedure. The doctor or nurse will explain if this is necessary.

## 'Red flag' symptoms to look out for after you go

- Vomiting
- Blood in vomit
- Tummy pain
- Blood in faeces (poo)

**We do not advise inspecting your child's faeces for a swallowed object such as a coin. It may take several days or even weeks to leave the body.**