

## Patient advice sheet

# Advice if your child has swallowed super strong magnets

## What are super strong magnets?

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 not legal to sell them to children less than 14 years of age.

They are between seven and fourteen times stronger than traditional magnets and are sometimes called super strong or powerful magnets. They can be a variety of shapes, most often balls or discs.

Below are some examples of what they look like:



Your child has been discharged after swallowing a magnet. Even though the magnet has not passed through their system yet, it is OK to take your child home.

## After going home:

- Your child will need a follow up X-ray in 6-12 hours' time. You should have been given a time to re attend the Emergency Department. This follow up X-ray is extremely important so doctors can make sure the magnet is moving normally through your child's bowels.
- Until your child has had their repeat X-ray, remove any other external magnetic objects nearby and avoid clothes with metallic buttons or belts with a buckle.
- There is no need to examine your child's poo to find the swallowed object.
- If a single magnet is ingested, it can be expected to be passed spontaneously if the magnet is not too large.

Very rarely, the object can become stuck in the stomach or intestines. Take your child to the Emergency Department IMMEDIATELY if:

- they may have swallowed another magnet or foreign body
- they have been vomiting

- have abdominal (tummy) pain
- have blood in their vomit or poo
- have a fever
- you have concerns about a change in your child's eating patterns, for example they are refusing food or fluids

### **How can I find out more?**

- Contact the Emergency Department at Stoke Mandeville Hospital: 01296 315000
  - The Royal College of Emergency Medicine Tel: +44 (0)20 7400 1999  
<http://www.rcem.ac.uk/>
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Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please note that it is subject to change. Please therefore always check specific advice on any concerns you may have with your doctor.

### **How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?**

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites. Further information is available on our website.

### **Patient Advice Sheet**

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, in large print or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 316042 or email [bht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:bht.pals@nhs.net)