



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:

*[theroyalalex.co.uk/clinical-services/aandel/](http://theroyalalex.co.uk/clinical-services/aandel/)*



**Useful numbers:**

NHS 111 - 24hr advice line  
Practice Plus (Brighton walk-in center/GP service)  
0333 321 0946  
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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Brighton and Sussex   
University Hospitals  
NHS Trust

the  
**alex**

Children's Emergency Department



**Ingestion of a foreign object**

Information for parents, carers & relatives

## Ingested (swallowed) foreign objects

Most swallowed foreign bodies/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 by a doctor.

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

## Metal detection

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 weeks to leave the body.**