



DANGERS OF BATTERIES FOR DOGS

Battery ingestions occur quite frequently in dogs. Sometimes this is witnessed, but other times it may be the owners arrive home to find a chewed device and missing or punctured battery. The use of coin-sized button batteries is on the rise throughout households, and even if you don't think you have any in your home, there's a good chance you are mistaken.

What makes batteries so dangerous?

- Most common batteries contain alkaline or acidic material, e.g. (AA, AAA, 9V) and if punctured or leaking can result in severe ulceration to the tissues of the mouth, oesophagus, stomach and intestines.
- The button/disc-shaped batteries allow an electric charge to flow through the tissues of the Gastrointestinal tract causing significant damage or perforation. Damage can occur quickly within 15-30 minutes of contact.
- Also, batteries contain heavy metals (e.g. Mercury, Zinc, Cobalt, Lead, Nickel or Cadmium) which can be toxic but the battery would need to stay in the Gastrointestinal tract for 2-3 days before enough is absorbed.



How to potentially prevent this?

- Look in your home for any items that may contain batteries particularly button batteries.
- Place devices out of reach of dogs
- Keep loose or spare batteries locked away

What to do if your dog swallows or chews a battery if this is suspected?

- Most importantly, do not induce vomiting. What is corrosive going down can also be corrosive coming up which may cause even more damage.
- Give a small amount of something tasty like chicken both or even a small drink of water to flush the corrosive substance from mouth and oesophagus.
- Get to the vet IMMEDIATELY after this flush and advise them of the battery
- If you are suspicious at all about a battery ingestion, do not waste time searching for small batteries in the house or rely on the presence of oral ulcerations to confirm they have ingested it. Just because oral ulcers or burns are not present doesn't mean that ulceration isn't occurring lower in the Gastrointestinal tract
- Time is critical with these ingestions to avoid severe damage.

What to expect at the vet clinic?

- The vet can take an X-ray to show if there is a battery and also if one is present, where it is located.
- Location determines the approach options for removal. The vets will discuss options to retrieve it as quickly as possible while minimising risk and these may include endoscopy (examination with a small camera) or surgery.
- Drugs like antacids and GI protectants are used to assist with any burning that has already occurred.