



Office for Product
Safety & Standards



Small, high-powered magnets Be aware!

We increasingly see small, high-powered magnets in our everyday lives, on fridges, in adult desk toys, or used as fashion and party accessories. But did you know that if they are swallowed, they can badly injure, or even kill? This advice will help you to keep your child safe.

The dangers of loose magnets

If a child swallows magnets, they can be forced together in the intestines or bowels, squeezing the tissue so that the blood supply is cut off. Ingesting magnets can cause significant internal damage within hours and be life-threatening.

Small magnetic products can also be choking hazards. Keep all magnets out of a child's reach.

How to keep children safe

Check your home

If you have toys or adult desk toys with small magnets, a magnetic sphere construction set, or keep magnets on your fridge, then move them out of the reach of small children. If a toy is faulty and magnets have come loose, get it fixed or dispose of it safely. Don't attach magnets to glassware as they can become loose and then easily swallowed. Report any product that you think is unsafe to your local Trading Standards team.



Talk to children about the dangers

Using magnetic products as fake piercings, on the tongue, mouth or nose, increases the risk of inhalation or ingestion. Discuss with children and teenagers why small high-powered magnets are dangerous, and why they shouldn't use them as fake piercings on their body, or as decorative items on glassware.



If you suspect your child has swallowed a magnet

If you think your child has swallowed a magnet, take them straight to the nearest A&E or call 999 for an ambulance.

Symptoms may not be obvious. Your child might:

- have stomach pain
- be vomiting
- have a fever
- be pointing to their throat or stomach

Unclear or fluctuating symptoms mean it's important to be vigilant.