

Centre for Hearing and Balance Disorders

Hearing aid battery advice

All hearing aids use batteries to power them. These batteries are known as coin batteries. At UHCW NHS Trust, zinc-air coin batteries are used for our hearing aids.

The zinc air battery uses air outside the battery as a power source. All new batteries have coloured sticky tabs that keep them sealed until you're ready to use them. These are generally orange, blue or brown, and they make sure the battery remains fresh until used. To activate the battery, you remove the tab and put the battery into your hearing aid.

Hearing aid battery safety

There is a potential risk if someone swallows a battery or pokes one into their ear or nostril.

If swallowed, the battery will pass through the body naturally and not cause harm in most cases. However, there is a rare risk that the battery can be lodged in the food pipe (oesophagus) if swallowed.



If you suspect an individual has swallowed a battery, or put a battery in their nose or ear, they should be taken to the nearest Accident and Emergency (A&E) department as soon as possible.



Patient Information

Do not let your child eat or drink until an X-ray can determine if a battery is present.

If you still have the battery packaging or the device containing the battery, take this with you to help the doctor identify the battery type and chemistry.

Try not to let younger children see the batteries being changed.

The audiologist can fit a lockable child-proof battery drawer to the hearing aid.

Tamper-proof hearing aids

Hearing aids can be fitted with lockable battery doors and lockable elbows. At UHCW NHS Trust, lockable battery drawers and elbows are given to all children under the age of 4 years and 11 months. This is to prevent the battery door from being opened and the battery swallowed or the elbow being removed and swallowed.

Tamper proofing should also be considered for older children and adults who:

- Live with babies or children under 4 years and 11 months of age.
- Have additional risk factors or live with those with additional risk factors, such as health conditions, that may increase the risk of them swallowing a battery, such as dementia, significant learning disability, or other cognitive or sensory impairments.

When your child is fitted with their hearing aid, your audiologist will show you how to open the battery door so you can safely change the battery. When hearing aids are changed or replaced, the audiologist will also show you that the lockable options have been used. If they do not show you, please ask to make sure they have been used.

How to store and dispose of batteries

- Store all batteries out of sight and reach of young children.
- Make sure that children cannot access the batteries that remain in the open packs.
- Avoid storing small batteries in pillboxes or setting them out with medication. Their shape and size make them easily mistaken for medication.
- Once a battery is flat, put it out of the children's reach and dispose of it as quickly as possible.
- Dispose of batteries safely. Do not put batteries into household rubbish. At UHCW NHS Trust we can dispose of these in our recycling boxes. Please ask a member of staff in Audiology and we will be more than happy to take these for you.

Alternatively, supermarkets will often have battery disposal bins that are free to use.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this Information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 6444 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

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