

Patient Advice leaflet – ingested magnets (Adults)

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’ and it 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.

Today, you have been discharged after swallowing of a magnet. Even though the magnet has not passed through you yet, it is OK to go home.

After going home, you will need a follow up X-ray 6-12 hours later and 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 bowels.

Until your repeat X-ray, remove any other external magnetic objects nearby and avoid clothes with metallic buttons or belts with buckle

There is no need to examine your faeces 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. Return to the Emergency Department IMMEDIATELY if you have

- Concerns of further magnet or foreign body ingestion
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Blood in vomit or poo
- A fever
- A change in appetite