

# Dear Educator,

Please stop using water beads with children immediately.

We know you want to provide the highest quality child care and educational environment. To help you reach that goal, we want to let you know that the term "non-toxic" is shockingly unregulated, and that using water beads with the kids in your care could put them at serious risk of injury.

Research has shown age restriction and caregiver observation are not an effective way to prevent water bead ingestion from occurring, as nearly half of the reported incidents occurred in school-aged children, with 30% occurring while the children were at school. Water beads are often mistaken by children as candy. When completely hydrated, water beads bounce like super balls and are nearly transparent; when they dehydrate, they shrink to the size of a pinhead, making them even harder to spot.

Your program provides children with the opportunity to grow physically, mentally, socially and emotionally while in a safe and stimulating environment. Thank you for allowing us to be apart of that mission.

**If you suspect a child has ingested water beads, SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY!**

**Do not wait for symptoms to develop!**

Signs and symptoms your child has swallowed water beads may include:

- Coughing/gagging
- Drooling
- Trouble swallowing
- Breathing faster, harder, or a consistent whistle noise with breathing
- Pain, discomfort
- Anxiousness
- Vomiting stomach contents or blood
- Throat pain
- Abdominal pain
- Chest pain
- Bloating
- Not eating
- Lethargy/ fatigue
- Red Dermatitis rash on face, around mouth or on hands
- Hiccups
- Trouble sleeping (waking up often or sleeping more)
- Fussy, but able to be settled by caregivers
- Increased nursing frequency
- Decrease in weight
- Mild hypotonia
- Weakness

Each case of water bead ingestion is unique and should be assessed by a medical professional. Water bead ingestion can be very dangerous as the beads expand from the water in our bodies. Since these accidents can happen so quickly, caregivers might not be aware that something is wrong.



**Water beads have been shown to cause severe injuries to children...**

- Dermatitis Rash
- Nasal cavity damage
- Hearing loss
- Lung damage
- Asphyxiation
- Intestinal obstruction
- Exposure to toxic chemicals
- Seizure
- Infection
- Sepsis
- Toxic encephalopathy
- Brain injury
- Death