

PRODUCT SAFETY ALERT – WATER BEADS

Audience: Primary/Secondary Schools

Cascade: Please share with all colleagues and parents

OPSS has issued a safety alert for a product commonly known as 'water beads' (<https://www.gov.uk/product-safety-alerts-reports-recalls/product-safety-alert-water-beads-psa7>), alongside a news story (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/opss-issues-safety-alert-to-warn-of-the-risks-of-water-beads>).

Water beads are marketed to fulfil a variety of different purposes, which can include being used as a toy, or in crafting, home decor and floristry.

The alert highlights the harms caused by the dehydrated bead/s when swallowed that can expand post-ingestion, causing a blockage along the gastrointestinal (GI) digestive tract requiring surgical removal. Additionally, a hydrated or dehydrated bead can cause asphyxiation from aspiration if swallowed. Ingested water beads can be very difficult to detect and do not show up on x-ray, making clinical diagnosis challenging.

They are also looking into the issue of 'baby personal protective equipment (PPE)' type products. For example, there are products for sale that are being marketed for use by babies and toddlers and claim to offer head protection in the event of a fall, such as:

[Baby Head Protection Pillow – Thebossbaby](#)

[BabySafe - Head Protector – TinyWonders](#)

[JINYJIA Baby Head Protector, Baby Head Protector Backpack, Adjustable Toddler Head Protection Safety Pads, for 4-24 Months Baby Learning Walking, Honeybee : Amazon.co.uk: Home & Kitchen](#)

Concerns have been raised that potentially the design and construction of this type of product presents an intolerable risk of harm to babies and young toddlers and they are gathering evidence around the risks. If you or colleagues are aware of any incidents/incident data relating to this product type, anything you share will be hugely appreciated and can only increase the robustness of the evidence

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