

CAN YOU SWALLOW



Yes, people do swallow pull-tabs. Here is an X-ray of one that got caught in a victim's esophagus.

BACK IN the mid-sixties, the opener that punched holes in beer and soft drink cans went the way of the button hook. Almost overnight a new means of opening cans was introduced—the pull-tab. Just as

quickly, pull-tabs became a new way to litter the landscape. The discarded rings and tabs even showed up in the intestinal tracts of fowl, fish and animals.

Doctors' reports show that ducks aren't the only ones swallowing the tabs. Many beverage drinkers get the bright idea of dropping the tabs into the can before drinking the contents. Every once in a while, the tab goes down with the drink.

One young beer-drinker was admitted to a hospital emergency room in pain with a pull-tab lodged in his esophagus. He spent the next three days in the hospital. After the tab was removed, he had to be fed intravenously, then restricted to a liquid diet until the ragged tears in his esophageal wall were healed.

A beer-drinking soldier gulped down a tab that lodged in his trachea without even realizing it. The tab was removed surgically when it caused complications with another chest injury two years later.

A five-year-old boy from Illinois was luckier; he swallowed a tab along with his soda pop and it passed through his system in a few days without causing any discomfort at all.

Dr. Lee F. Rogers, of Northwestern University, and Dr. John P. Igin, of Loyola University in Chicago, who have been studying the problem, admit that "the odds are long" on swallowing a pull-tab. But they point out that thousands of cans of soft drinks and beer are consumed daily, so it's not surprising that such cases do occur.

They suggest that people dispose of the tabs separately in a waste receptacle. Or the tab can be placed in a pocket or worn like a finger ring until the can has been emptied, then slipped through the can slot for disposal.

Whichever method you find the easiest, be on the safe side—keep tabs on the pull-tab. □

from Family Safety

WILLIAM S. SPIVEY, materials manager in Film Division plant at Pisgah Forest, has been transferred to corporate headquarters at Stamford, Conn., as manager of corporate planning analysis. He was employed by Olin in June 1969 as an operations research analyst in the Systems and Computer Operations of the Fine Paper and Film Group, and moved to the Film Division post in 1971. He is a native of Alexander City, Ala., where he graduated from Benjamin Russell High School. He



earned his B.S. and Masters degrees at the University of Alabama, both in Industrial Engineering. He was an instructor and research assistant in the Industrial Engineering Department in both undergraduate and graduate schools. He was a member of Delta Tau Delta social fraternity, Pi Mu Epsilon math fraternity, and Alpha Pi Mu industrial engineering fraternity. He is a member of the American Institute of Industrial Engineers.

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ARVIL R. BALDING has been appointed materials coordinator in the Ecusta Paper Division. He was employed by Olin in December 1958. He served as materials scheduler before his new assignment. A native of Madison County, he entered the U. S. Army after graduating from high school at Waynesville. After two years of active duty he served another seven years in the U. S. Army Reserves.



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