

News in Brief

Toy story

The US toy company Mattel has recalled more than 18 million toys world wide. Two main concerns have been cited. One, that some toys have small powerful magnets which can come loose. Children may swallow or aspirate these. If more than one magnet is swallowed, magnets may attract each other and cause intestinal perforation or blockage.

The other reason for recall is the excessive levels of lead in the surface paints which is toxic if ingested by children. The toys which have been recalled include Polly Pocket play sets, Sarge die cast toy cars, Barbie and Tanner play sets and Batman and one piece magnetic action figure sets.

All the recalled toys were made in China. Earlier this month 1.5 million toys made for pre-schoolers had also been recalled. The owner of that Chinese toy factory has reportedly committed suicide. No injuries have been reported in children in connection with the toys, though Mattel cites the policy of abundant caution as the reason (The Economic Times 15 August 2007).

Hospital networking

Cisco Systems Inc. is one of Silicon Valleys most

respected technology companies famous for selling routers and switches to telecom companies. Today, much to everyone's surprise the fastest growing segment in the company is that which deals with hospitals. Hospitals are racing ahead to install wireless technology. Cisco is now teaming up with device manufacturers to ensure that more data can be shared on internet protocol networks. In addition to standard network equipment, Cisco offers hospitals gadgets to deliver and track health records electronically, and its internet based system helps hospitals monitor medical equipment and respond quickly to nurse calls.

It also incorporates its video conference technology into Health Presence a real time conferencing system that connects patients, doctors and interpreters, which will offer better care to people in remote areas. It has partnered with GE Health Care to ensure that data from blood pressure readers and X-ray machines are digitally formatted and delivered over an Internet protocol network (Scientific American 17 August 2007).

Gouri Rao Passi,

*Consultant, Department of Pediatrics,
Choithram Hospital & Research Centre,
Indore,
India.*

Email: gouripasi@hotmail.com