

## First Aid for Choking

### Introduction:

Choking occurs when a foreign object is lodged in the throat or windpipe, blocking the flow of air. In adults, a piece of food often is the culprit, while young children often swallow small objects.

### Symptoms:

- Hands clutched to the throat.
- Inability to talk.
- Difficulty breathing or noisy breathing.
- Squeaky sounds when trying to breathe.
- Coughing, which may either be mild or severe.
- Skin, lips and nails turning blue.
- Loss of consciousness.

### First aid:

- If the person is still able to breathe normally, then they should keep coughing.
- If the person is choking and is unable to talk, cry or laugh forcefully, then the following should be done:
  1. Stand behind the choking person.
  2. Place one foot slightly in front of the other for balance.
  3. Wrap your arms around the person's waist.
  4. Tip the person forward slightly.
  5. Make a fist with one hand and position it slightly above the person's navel.
  6. Grasp the fist with the other hand. Press hard into the abdomen with a quick, upward thrust.
  7. Perform between 6 and 10 abdominal thrusts until the blockage is dislodged.

However, if the choking person becomes unconscious, perform standard cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) with chest compressions and rescue breathing.

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