

Choking

Definition:

Choking is the inability to inhale and exhale due to an obstruction in the trachea. The air cannot enter the lungs; it is an urgent medical case.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Blue face and extremities
- Inability to talk or even cry
- Fragile cough and breathing difficulties
- Gaspings, pauses in breathing

Treatment:

Adult and child choking - conscious

Consider doing the following steps when treating someone unable to talk or breathe and having a throat obstruction:

- Give five “abdominal thrusts” (Heimlich maneuver): stand or kneel behind the victim and wrap your arms around the victim’s waist. Make a fist with one hand. Place the thumb side of your fist against the victim’s abdomen, in the midline, slightly above the navel, and well below the breastbone. Grasp your fist with your other hand and press your fist into the victim’s abdomen with a quick, forceful upward thrust.
- Repeat thrusts until the object is expelled from the airway or the victim becomes unconscious.

Choking - unconscious

- Open the airway by head tilt, chin lift, and check inside the mouth for the object.
- If the object is not visible, start chest compressions.
- Give 30 compressions to two ventilations.
- Every time you inspect the mouth, check for the presence of a foreign object. If you observe any, proceed to remove it with a sweeping motion.