



Choking

A foreign object that is stuck at the back of the throat may block the throat or cause muscular spasm.

If the blockage of the area airway is mild, the casualty should be able to clear it; if it is severe, they will be unable to speak, cough, or breathe, and will eventually lose consciousness.

Recognition

Mild obstruction: Individual able to speak, cry, cough or breathe.

Severe obstruction: Individual is unable to speak, cry, cough or breathe, individual will eventually become unconscious without assistance.

Treatment for adult or child

The aim is to remove the obstruction and to arrange urgent removal to hospital if necessary.

If the obstruction is mild:

- Encourage them to continue coughing
- Remove any obvious obstruction from the mouth.

If the obstruction is severe:

- Give up to five back blows
- Check the mouth and remove any obvious obstruction.

If the obstruction is still present:

- Give up to five abdominal thrusts
- Check the mouth and remove any obvious obstruction.

If the obstruction does not clear after three cycles of back blows and abdominal thrusts:

- Dial 999 (or 112) for an ambulance Continue until help arrives.

If the individual becomes unconscious:

- Lower the individual on his or her back onto the floor.
- Clear the airway. If there's a visible blockage at the back of the throat or high in the throat, reach a finger into the mouth and sweep out the cause of the blockage. Be careful not to push the food or object deeper into the airway, which can happen easily in children.
- Begin (CPR) if the object remains lodged and the person doesn't respond after you have taken the above measures. The chest compressions used in CPR may dislodge the object. Remember to recheck the mouth periodically.

Continue until help arrives

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