

Abdominal Thrusts

- Roll the victim onto his or her back and take a position alongside or straddle the victim's hips.
- Place one of your hands on top of the other, with the heel of the bottom hand on the victim's abdomen between the navel and the rib cage. Push in and upward 6-10 times. Your shoulders should be directly over the victim's abdomen.

Repeat the sequence of Heimlich Maneuver, finger sweep, and ventilation until successful. STOP as soon as the victim begins breathing.

Infants and Children

For information on first aid for choking infants and children, write to the

New York State Department of Health
Box 2000
Albany, NY 12220

and ask for pamphlet #0607.



Self help

If you're alone and find yourself choking, it's possible to save your own life!

- Make a fist with one hand and place thumb side against your abdomen. With the other hand, grasp your fist and push it upward in sharp, thrusting moves.
- Another method is to press your abdomen forcefully against the back of a chair or railing, so that air is forced out of your lungs to expel the object.

Obtain immediate medical care

All choking victims should seek medical care - even if they seem fully recovered.

While complications can result from the use of abdominal thrusts on a pregnant woman or on someone with a pre-existing medical disorder, first aid for choking should still be used if the victim is in danger of choking to death.

First Aid for Choking Victims



State of New York
George E. Pataki, Governor

Department of Health
Barbara A. DeBuono, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

Choking on food is the sixth leading cause of accidental death - killing more Americans than airplane crashes or firearms. Older people and small children are the most frequent victims of choking, but it can happen to anyone. Every able-bodied adult should know the simple first aid procedures that can save someone's life. Consider getting first aid training that could help you save a life. Contact your local chapter of the American Red Cross or American Heart Association to learn more.

Choking can often be prevented. Make sure that

- food is cut into small enough pieces
- people don't laugh or talk while chewing
- reflexes are not dulled by alcohol or drugs
- children don't run or play with food or foreign objects in their mouths.

How to recognize choking



Universal Sign

The 'Universal Sign' is a signal for help, made by grasping the neck between the thumb and index finger of one hand.

Persons who are choking

- suddenly cannot speak, breathe or cough
- may give the Universal Sign by grabbing at their throat
- may frantically toss their heads or run about in panic
- turn blue and finally collapse.

Since death from choking can occur within minutes, speed in removing the object which is blocking the windpipe is crucial.

You should know how to get help in an emergency. In many New York State communities, calling 911 will get Emergency Medical Services.

Find out the number you should use before you face an emergency.

Whenever possible, have someone call for EMS help FIRST.

First aid for choking

Stand by but **do not interfere with a person who can speak, cough or breathe.** If the victim cannot speak, cough or breathe, immediately have someone call for emergency medical help while you take the following action:

For a conscious victim standing or sitting

- Ask: "Are you choking?"



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- Stand behind the victim and wrap your arms around his or her waist. Allow the victim's head and upper body to hang forward.

- Make a fist with one hand. Grasp the fist with your other hand, placing the thumb side of the clenched fist against the victim's abdomen slightly above the navel and below the rib cage.

Caution: Make certain your fist is below the rib cage.

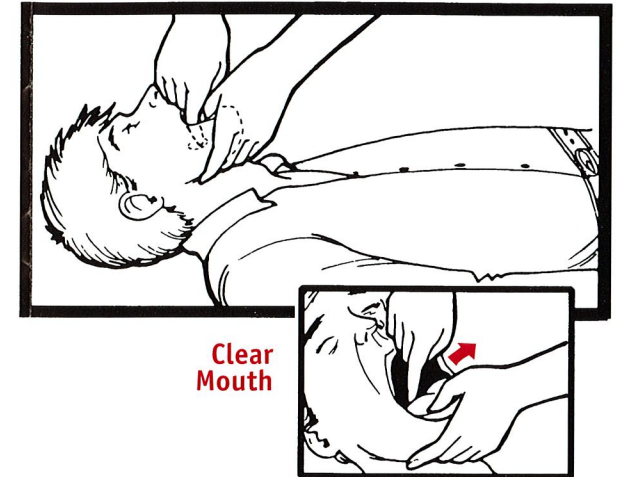
- With a quick inward and upward thrust, press your fist into the victim's abdomen. Repeat this action if necessary.

(The abdominal thrust is often called the "Heimlich Maneuver," because it was originated by Dr. Henry J. Heimlich, a Cincinnati surgeon.)

For a victim lying down or unconscious

Note: Persons trained in mouth-to-mouth resuscitation may attempt to ventilate (breathe for) an unconscious victim. If ventilation is not immediately successful, begin the following sequence:

- Check to see if food or object has been dislodged into mouth. Open the victim's mouth by grasping both the tongue and lower jaw between the thumb and fingers and then gently lift the jaw upward.



Clear Mouth

- Insert the index finger of the other hand down along the inside of the cheek and into the throat as far as the base of the tongue.

- Then use a hooking action with the same finger to dislodge and remove the food or foreign body. Be careful not to push the food back into the windpipe.

- Attempt ventilation (mouth-to-mouth resuscitation).

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