

# Choking Prevention

## Facts:

- More than 2,800 people die each year from choking; many of them are children.
- Two-thirds of the children who choked to death during a 20-year period were 3 years old or younger.
- Nearly 70 percent of choking deaths among children age 3 and under were caused by toys and other products made for children.
- The most common cause of non-fatal choking incidents is food.
- Nearly 70 percent of choking cases in the emergency rooms were caused by foods such as hotdogs, nuts, and vegetable and fruit pieces.

## Childhood Choking Prevention Tips:

- Keep the following items away from infants and young children: Latex balloons, Coins, Marbles, Toys with small parts, Toys that can be compressed to fit entirely into a child's mouth, Small balls, Pen or marker caps, Small button-type batteries, Medicine syringes.
- Before a child begins to crawl, get down on his level and look for dangerous items. If you have older children, pay extra attention to their toys and be sure your younger child can't get into them.
- Be aware that balloons pose a choking risk to children of any age.
- Keep the following foods from children until 4 years of age: Hot dogs, Nuts and seeds, Chunks of meat or cheese, Whole grapes, (Hard, gooey, or sticky) candy, Popcorn, Chunks of peanut butter, Raw vegetables, Raisins, Chewing gum.
- Insist that children eat at the table, or at least while sitting down. They should never run, walk, play or lie down with food in their mouths.

## The Heimlich Maneuver for Choking

*Courtesy of: The Heimlich Institute*

A choking victim can't speak or breathe and needs your help immediately. Follow these steps to help a choking victim:

1. From behind, wrap your arms around the victim's waist.
2. Make a fist and place the thumb side of your fist against the victim's upper abdomen, below the ribcage and above the navel.
3. Grasp your fist with your other hand and press into their upper abdomen with a quick upward thrust. Do not squeeze the ribcage; confine the force of the thrust to your hands. Repeat until object is expelled.

## **UNCONSCIOUS VICTIM, OR WHEN RESCUER CAN'T REACH AROUND VICTIM:**

1. Place the victim on back.
2. Facing the victim, kneel astride the victim's hips.
3. With one of your hands on top of the other, place the heel of your bottom hand on the upper abdomen below the rib cage and above the navel.
4. Use your body weight to press into the victim's upper abdomen with a quick upward thrust. Repeat until object is expelled.
5. If the Victim has not recovered, proceed with CPR.

The Victim should see a physician immediately after rescue.

**Don't slap the victim's back. (This could make matters worse.)**

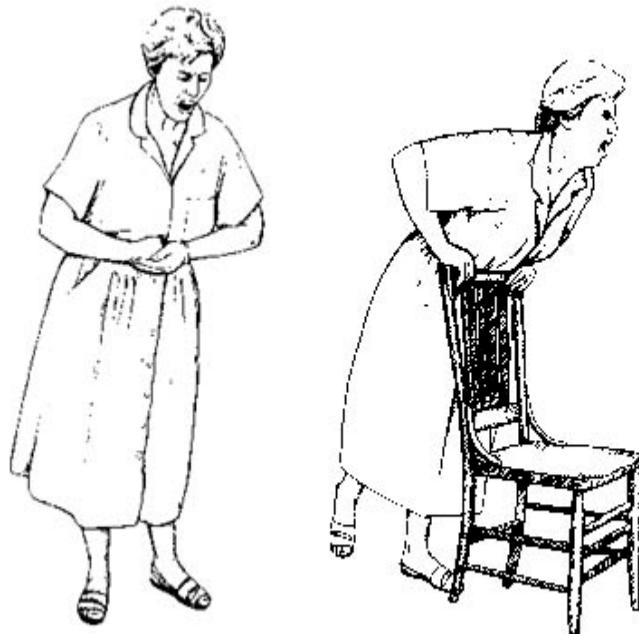


## **The Heimlich Maneuver on YOURSELF**

When you choke, you can't speak or breathe and you need help immediately. Follow these steps to save yourself from choking:

1. Make a fist and place the thumb side of your fist against your upper abdomen, below the ribcage and above the navel.
2. Grasp your fist with your other hand and press into your upper abdomen with a quick upward thrust.
3. Repeat until object is expelled.
4. Alternatively, you can lean over a fixed horizontal object (table edge, chair, railing) and press your upper abdomen against the edge to produce a quick upward thrust. Repeat until object is expelled.

See a physician immediately after rescue.



## The Heimlich Maneuver on Infants

A choking victim can't speak or breathe and needs your help immediately. Follow these steps to help a choking infant:

1. Lay the child down, face up, on a firm surface and kneel or stand at the victim's feet, or hold infant on your lap facing away from you.
2. Place the middle and index fingers of both your hands below his rib cage and above his navel.
3. Press into the victim's upper abdomen with a quick upward thrust; do not squeeze the rib cage. Be very gentle. Repeat until object is expelled.
4. If the Victim has not recovered, proceed with CPR. The Victim should see a physician immediately after rescue.



**Don't slap the victim's back. (This could make matters worse.)**

