

### 1. Signs of mild choking

- Ask the person 'Are you choking?'
- It is mild choking if they:
  - o answer 'yes'
  - o is able to speak, cough and breathe
- Encourage them to continue coughing, but do nothing else.
- Wait with the person until the obstruction has cleared and they have stopped choking.

### 2. Signs of severe choking

- Ask the person 'Are you choking?'
- It is severe choking if:
  - o unable to speak or responds by nodding.
  - o unable to breathe or breathing sounds wheezy.
  - o attempts to cough, but is unable to cough properly.
  - o becomes unconscious.

### What to do if the person is conscious and shows signs of severe choking



#### Give up to 5 back slaps

- o Stand to the side and slightly behind the person.
- o Support the chest with one hand.
- o Lean the person forwards so that when the obstructing object is dislodged it comes out of the mouth rather than goes further down the airway.
- o Give up to 5 sharp slaps between the shoulder blades with the heel of your hand.
- o Check to see if each slap has relieved the airway obstruction. The aim is to relieve the obstruction with each slap rather than necessarily give all 5.



#### If 5 back slaps fail to remove the airway obstruction, give up to 5 abdominal thrusts

- o Stand behind the person and put both arms around the upper part of the stomach.
- o Lean the person forwards.
- o Clench your fist and place it above the belly button.
- o Grasp this hand with your other hand and pull sharply inwards and upwards.
- o Repeat up to 5 times.

**If the obstruction is still not removed, continue alternating 5 back slaps with 5 abdominal thrusts.**

### What to do if a person becomes unconscious

- Support the person carefully to the ground.
- Immediately call an ambulance.
- Begin Basic Life Support with Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

### Explanatory Notes

- Following successful treatment for choking, some foreign material may remain in the throat or lungs which could cause complications later. Anyone with a persistent cough, difficulty swallowing, or with the sensation of an object still being stuck in the throat should therefore be referred to a Doctor for a medical opinion.
- Abdominal thrusts can cause internal injuries and anyone who has received abdominal thrusts should be examined by a Doctor.