

Obstruction\_1991.txt

SECTION II

OBSTRUCTIONS IN THE AIRWAY

[NOTE: Emergency treatment of airway obstructions is taught as part of CPR training and only through classroom practice can the necessary skills be mastered. The mechanics of handling airway obstructions are presented in this tutorial for background insight only]

If an individual is choking - but can speak or cough forcibly-there is an exchange of air (although it might be diminished) and you should encourage the victim to continue coughing while you just stand by! On the other hand, if a victim is choking, but CANNOT speak or cough, an airway obstruction exists which must be treated immediately!

The treatment for an obstructed airway in a conscious victim involves the HEIMLICH MANEUVER which is performed as follows:

STAND BEHIND THE VICTIM

WRAP YOUR ARMS AROUND THE VICTIM'S WAIST

MAKE A FIST WITH ONE HAND AND PLACE THE THUMB SIDE OF THE FIST AGAINST THE VICTIM'S ABDOMEN, JUST ABOVE THE NAVEL AND WELL BELOW THE LOWER TIP OF THE BREASTBONE

GRASP YOUR FIST WITH YOUR OTHER HAND

WITH ELBOWS OUT, PRESS YOUR FIST INTO THE VICTIM'S ABDOMEN

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WITH QUICK, UPWARD THRUSTS

EACH THRUST IS A DISTINCT, SEPARATE ATTEMPT TO DISLODGE THE FOREIGN OBJECT

REPEAT THRUSTS UNTIL FOREIGN OBJECT IS CLEARED OR VICTIM BECOMES UNCONSCIOUS

Emergency treatment of airway obstructions in an unconscious victim is taught in CPR classes.