



## Breathing

# A46

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### Choking

Anything stuck in the throat blocking the air passage can stop breathing and cause unconsciousness and death within 4 to 6 minutes.

1. Do not interfere with a choking victim who can speak, cough or breathe. However, if the choking continues without lessening, call for emergency medical help.

2. If the victim cannot speak, cough or breathe, immediately have someone call for emergency medical help while you take the following action:

#### A. For a conscious victim:

1. Stand just behind and to the side of the victim who can be standing or sitting. Support the victim with one hand on the chest. The victim's head should be lowered. Give 4 sharp blows between the shoulder blades. If unsuccessful—



2. Stand behind the victim, who can be standing or sitting, wrap your arms around his or her middle just above the navel. Clasp your hands together in a doubled fist and press in and up in quick thrusts. Repeat several times.



If still unsuccessful—Repeat 4 back blows and 4 quick thrusts until the victim is no longer choking or becomes unconscious.

#### B. For an unconscious victim:

1. Place the victim on the floor or ground and give rescue breathing. (See Rescue Breathing section.) If the victim does not start breathing and it appears that your air is not going into the victim's lungs—



2. Roll the victim onto his/her side, facing you, with the victim's chest against your knee and give 4 sharp blows between the shoulder blades. If the victim still does not start breathing—



3. Roll the victim onto his or her back and give one or more manual thrusts. To give the thrusts, place one of your hands on top of the other with the heel of the bottom hand in the middle of the abdomen, slightly above the navel and below the rib cage. Press into the victim's abdomen with a quick upward thrust. Do not press to either side. Repeat 4 times if needed.



4. Clear the airway.  
A. Hold the victim's mouth open with one hand using your thumb to depress the tongue.  
B. Make a hook with the pointer finger of your other hand, and in a gentle sweeping motion reach into the victim's throat and feel for a swallowed foreign object which may be blocking the air passage. Repeat until successful:  
(1) 4 back blows.  
(2) 4 abdominal thrusts.  
(3) Probe in mouth.  
(4) Try to inflate lungs.  
(5) Repeat



**Note:** If the object has not been retrieved, but the swallower suddenly seems all right, play it safe...take him or her directly to the hospital. This is especially critical if the swallowed object is a fish bone, chicken bone or other jagged object that could do internal damage as it passes through the victim's system.



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### Unconscious Person

Breathing is the most critical thing we must do to stay alive. A primary cause of death is lack of air!

Be careful approaching an unconscious person. He or she may be in contact with electrical current. If that is the case, turn off the electricity before you touch the victim.

There are hundreds of other possible causes of unconsciousness, but the first thing you must check for is breathing.

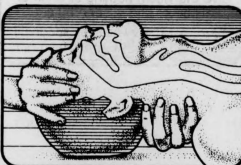
1. Try to awaken the person: Shake the victim's shoulder vigorously.  
Shout: "Are you all right?"

2. If there is no response, check for signs of breathing.

A. Be sure the victim is lying flat on his or her back. If you have to, roll the victim over. Turn his or her head with remainder of body as a unit to avoid possible neck injury.  
B. Loosen tight clothing around the neck and chest.

#### 3. Open the airway:

A. If there are no signs of head or neck injuries, tilt the neck gently with one hand, causing the chin to protrude upward.  
B. Push down and back on the forehead with the other hand as you tip the head back.



C. Place your ear close to the victim's mouth. Listen for breath sounds. Watch his or her chest and stomach for movement. Check for at least 5 seconds.

D. If there is any question in your mind, or if breathing is so faint that you are unsure...assume the worst!  
E. Give rescue breathing immediately. Have someone else summon professional help.

### Rescue Breathing

1. Giving mouth to mouth rescue breathing to an adult.

A. Put your hand on the victim's forehead, pinching the nose shut with your fingers, while holding the forehead back.  
B. Your other hand is under the victim's neck supporting and lifting up slightly to maintain an open airway.  
C. Take a deep breath. Open your mouth wide. Place it over the victim's mouth. Blow air into the victim until you see his or her chest rise.



D. Remove your mouth from the victim's. Turn your head to the side and watch the chest for a falling movement while you listen for air escaping from the victim's mouth as he or she exhales.

E. If you hear air escaping and see the chest fall you know that rescue breathing is working. Continue until help arrives.

F. Initially give 4 breaths in rapid succession, then repeat single breath every 5 seconds. (12 breaths per minute.)



2. Giving mouth to mouth rescue breathing to infants and small children.

A. Be careful tilting a small child's head back to clear the airway. It should not be tilted as far back as an adult's. If tilted back too far, it will make the obstruction worse.  
B. Cover the child's mouth and nose with your mouth.  
C. Blow air in with less pressure than for an adult. Give small puffs. A child needs less.  
D. Feel the chest inflate as you blow.



E. Listen for exhalations.  
F. Repeat once every 3 seconds. 20 breaths per minute.

**Note:** It may take several hours to revive someone. Keep up rescue breathing until help arrives to relieve you. Remember, you are doing the breathing for the victim. If you stop—in about 4 to 6 minutes—he or she could be dead! Even if the victim begins to breathe on his/her own, call for professional help.

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