

Safety Fact Sheet



The Utah Safety Council cares about your safety outside of the work setting. We offer resources that keep you and your loved ones safe at home, at play and on the go.

IF SOMEONE IS CHOKING...

Step 1: Ask the choking person to stand if he or she is sitting.

Step 2: Place yourself slightly behind the standing victim.

Step 3: Reassure the victim that you know the Heimlich maneuver and are going to help.

Step 4: Place your arms around the victim's waist.

Step 5: Make a fist with one hand and place your thumb toward the victim, just above his or her belly button.

Step 6: Grab your fist with your other hand.

Step 7: Deliver five upward squeeze-thrusts into the abdomen.

Step 8: Make each squeeze-thrust strong enough to dislodge a foreign body. Understand that your thrusts make the diaphragm move air out of the victim's lungs, creating a kind of artificial cough.

Step 9: Keep a firm grip on the victim, since he or she can lose consciousness and fall to the ground if the Heimlich maneuver is not effective.

Step 10: Repeat abdominal thrusts until the foreign body is expelled.

Tips & Warnings

- If a victim is coughing strongly or able to talk, let the person try to expel the foreign body using his or her own efforts.
- If the choking victim displays a weak or ineffective cough, this indicates that air exchange is minimal and that you should start the Heimlich maneuver
- Teach your family the universal choking sign--clutching the throat. Encourage everyone you know to become familiar with this sign and use it when choking
- To avoid breaking bones, never place your hands on the victim's breastbone or lower rib cage when performing the Heimlich maneuver
- If choking persists, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Enroll in one of our First Aid, CPR and AED courses for more in-depth instruction to make your home a safer place. This information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment.

