

FREE BABY CHOKING GUIDE

Infant choking first aid (infant = under 1 year)

Based on ANZCOR Guideline 4 – Airway



**SMALL
PEOPLE
MATTER.**

1. WHAT IS CHOKING?

A choking emergency happens when an object partly or completely blocks airflow. A foreign body airway obstruction (FBAO) is a life-threatening emergency.

2. RECOGNISE THE SEVERITY

EFFECTIVE COUGH (MILD)



- Air is still moving
- Baby may cough or gag
- Reassure and encourage coughing
- If the obstruction is not relieved, call 000

INEFFECTIVE COUGH (SEVERE)



- Little or no airflow
- Breathing may be difficult or silent
- Weak or no cry
- Needs immediate help

Observe the baby continuously. Choking can worsen within seconds.

3. WHAT TO DO

1 CALL FOR HELP



If the cough is ineffective, send for an ambulance / call 000.

2 GIVE UP TO 5 BACK BLOWS



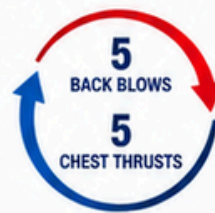
Place the infant head-down across your lap. Give sharp back blows between the shoulder blades. Check after each blow. The aim is to relieve the obstruction, not automatically give all 5.

3 GIVE UP TO 5 CHEST THRUSTS



If back blows do not work, place the infant on their back, head-down across your thigh. Use the same compression point as CPR. Chest thrusts are sharper and slower than CPR compressions. Check after each thrust.

4 REPEAT IF NEEDED



If the obstruction is still not relieved and the baby remains responsive, continue alternating 5 back blows with 5 chest thrusts.

5 IF UNRESPONSIVE



If the baby becomes unresponsive and is not breathing normally, follow DRABCD / the ANZCOR Basic Life Support flowchart and commence CPR.

4. IMPORTANT REMINDERS



Do **NOT** use abdominal thrusts / the Heimlich manoeuvre for infants.



Do **NOT** perform a blind finger sweep.



You may remove an object only if you can actually see it in the mouth.



Back blows and chest thrusts are the recommended approach.



When opening an infant's airway, keep the head in a neutral position. Maximum head tilt should not be used.

5. WHEN TO GET EMERGENCY HELP



Call 000 **urgently** if the baby has an ineffective cough, little or no airflow, becomes floppy, becomes unresponsive, or is not breathing normally.

Quick action matters. Learn the steps before you need them.

Source: ANZCOR Guideline 4 – Airway, accessed 10 September 2026.



First Line
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