

# CHOKING ADULT/CHILD

## Managing a choking adult or child (over 1 year)

### Signs & symptoms

- clutching the throat
- coughing, wheezing, gagging
- difficulty breathing, speaking, swallowing
- making a whistling or 'crowing' noise or no sound at all
- face, neck lips, ears, fingernails turning blue

### Management

- 1. Encourage adult or child to relax, breathe deeply and cough to remove object**
  - 2. If coughing does not remove the blockage, or if patient is an infant— call triple zero (000) for an ambulance**
  - 3. Bend patient well forward and give 5 back blows**
    - with heel of hand between the shoulder blades—checking if obstruction is relieved after each back blow
  - 4. If unsuccessful, give chest thrusts**
    - place one hand in the middle of patient's back for support and heel of other hand in the CPR compression position and give 5 chest thrusts, slower but sharper than compressions
    - check if obstruction is relieved after each chest thrust
  - 5. If blockage does not clear**
    - continue alternating 5 back blows with 5 chest thrusts until medical aid arrives
- If patient becomes unconscious**
- call triple zero (000) for an ambulance
  - remove visible obstruction from mouth
  - commence CPR

In an emergency, call triple zero (000) for an ambulance

**For more information on St John first aid training and kits, visit [www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au) or freecall 1300 360 455**