

# First Aid for Teachers: Choking



Choking occurs when an object becomes lodged in the windpipe, causing full or partial blockage of the airway which leads to difficulty breathing.

Teachers may be faced with a student that is choking, below are the signs to look out for:

## Signs a student is choking:



Clutching at throat



Unable to breathe



Wheezing or noisy breathing



Unable to speak



Decreasing levels of consciousness



If a student has the symptoms above, you must act quickly to help as choking can lead to decreasing levels of oxygen in the brain causing further damage.

There is a simple and easy to remember five and five approach to follow, alternating between back blows and abdominal thrusts as shown below.

## Back Blow:

- 1 Lean the student forward
- 2 Place your hand between the shoulder blades
- 3 Administer five sharp blows to the back using the heel of your hand



Check the **mouth** between each back blow to see if the item has become **dislodged**. If not proceed to step two.

# Abdominal Thrusts:

- 1 Stand behind the student and wrap your arms around their waist
- 2 Place your fist just above their navel
- 3 Grasp your fist with the other hand. Press hard into the abdomen with a quick, upward thrust — as if trying to lift the person up.
- 4 If this does not work and the student is still choking, call 999 for emergency help.



If the student becomes **unconscious** at any point you must call for **emergency help** and start **CPR**.

## **Virtual College**

Marsel House  
Stephensons Way  
Ilkley  
West Yorkshire  
LS29 8DD

+44 (0)1943 605 976  
[virtual-college.co.uk](http://virtual-college.co.uk)