



# Section 2: Adult Airway/Respiratory Protocols

## ADULT AIRWAY/RESPIRATORY: FOREIGN BODY AIRWAY OBSTRUCTION

E	EMT	E
A	AEMT	A
P	PARAMEDIC	P
M	MED CONTROL	M

UNIVERSAL PATIENT CARE PROTOCOL

Head Tilt / Chin Lift / Jaw Thrust  
Airway Maneuvers

Coughing  
Conscious

Encourage Patient to Cough

OXYGEN  
10 – 15 lpm NRB

Complete Obstruction  
Conscious

Abdominal Thrusts

Complete Obstruction  
Unconscious

Visualize / Finger Sweep

Open Airway / Rescue  
Breathing

Chest Thrusts

If unable to ventilate,  
reposition head and  
attempt again

If unable to ventilate,  
continue sequence

Direct Laryngoscopy  
Attempt Removal with  
Magill Forceps

If unable to remove obstruction  
NEEDLE CRICOTHYROTOMY  
OR  
CRICOTHYROTOMY KIT



Not Had Training on  
Cricothyrotomy Kit

TRANSPORT to appropriate facility CONTACT receiving facility CONSULT Medical Direction where indicated



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### ADULT AIRWAY/RESPIRATORY: FOREIGN BODY AIRWAY OBSTRUCTION-cont.

#### PEARLS and KEY POINTS

INDICATIONS	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coughing</li><li>• Choking</li><li>• Inability to speak</li><li>• Unresponsive</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Witnessed aspiration</li><li>• Sudden episode of choking</li><li>• Gagging</li><li>• Audible stridor</li><li>• Change in skin color</li><li>• Decreased LOC</li><li>• Increased or decreased Respiratory rate</li><li>• Labored breathing</li><li>• Unproductive cough</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cardiac arrest</li><li>• Respiratory arrest</li><li>• Anaphylaxis</li><li>• Esophageal obstruction</li></ul>

- With complete obstruction, positive-pressure ventilation may be successful.
- Needle cricothyrotomy will provide short term oxygenation only (not ventilation) and is used to “buy time” until other interventions can assure appropriate ventilation.
- Quicktrach kits have a larger internal diameter and thus will provide some minimal ventilation.
- Needle cricothyrotomy and Quicktrach kits are bridge devices to surgical intervention.
- If trained, a scalpel may be used in obese or patients with otherwise difficult to identify cricothyrotomy landmarks to make a VERTICAL, MIDLINE incision below the thyroid cartilage to help identify the cricothyroid membrane. Then use Quicktrach once the membrane is identified.