

Adult Foreign-Body Airway Obstruction Algorithm

Text in cascading boxes describes the actions that a professional should perform in sequence during an adult foreign-body airway obstruction (FBAO). Arrows guide professionals from one box to the next as they perform the actions. Some boxes have 2 arrows that lead outward, each to a different box depending on the outcome of the most recent action taken. Pathways are linked.

Box 1

Verify scene safety.

Box 2

Check for signs of severe FBAO

- Weak or absence of cough
- Unable to speak
- Change in color (cyanosis)
- Altered mental state status
- Apnea

If signs are absent, proceed to [Box 3](#).

If signs are present, proceed to [Box 4](#).

Box 3

- Encourage cough.
- Continue to check for **signs of severe FBAO**, and proceed back to [Box 2](#).

Box 4

Activate the emergency response system.

Box 5

Is the adult responsive?

If Yes, proceed to [Box 6](#).

If No, proceed to [Box 7](#).

Box 6

Start repeated cycles of

- 5 back blows (slaps) followed by
- 5 abdominal thrusts (note for patients in the late stages of pregnancy, or when the rescuer is unable to encircle the patient's abdomen, 5 chest thrusts should be used instead.)
- Repeat until object is expelled or the adult becomes unresponsive.
- If object is expelled, continue to monitor until advanced care arrives.

Proceed back to [Box 5](#).

Box 7

Start CPR until advanced care arrives; refer to adult basic life support algorithm.

- Start with compressions.
- Check for visible object in mouth prior to breaths.