Choking

If someone is choking, it is important to assess the situation quickly to see how best you can help.

Mild Obstruction

If the casualty is able to speak, cry, cough or breathe:

- Encourage them to continue coughing
- Remove any obvious obstruction from their mouth

Severe Obstruction

If the casualty is unable to speak, cry, cough or breathe:

- Give up to five back blows between the person's shoulder blades with the heel of your hand whilst supporting their chest
- Check their mouth and remove any obvious obstruction.

If the obstruction is still present:

- Give up to five abdominal thrusts (also known as the Heimlich manoeuvre)
- Check their mouth and remove any obvious obstruction

Repeat this cycle of back blows and abdominal thrusts. If the obstruction does not clear after three cycles, dial **999** and ask for an ambulance.

Continue the above cycle until help arrives.

Important: Do not use abdominal thrusts with babies under one year old or with pregnant women.

Other Useful Organisations

- **NHS 111** is the new telephone service which has replaced NHS Direct. You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time.
- **NHS.UK** is a website providing health and medical advice, an online symptom checker and a facility for searching for services near you.

Please note – The content on this website is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your own doctor or any other health care professional. If you are feeling unwell, make an appointment to see your GP or contact **NHS 111**. In an emergency, dial **999**.

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Useful Organisations

St. John Ambulance Northumbria

Email: countyhq@northumbria.sja.org.uk

Website: www.sja.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 273 7938

Address: St. John House, NE4 9PQ

NHS 111

Website: www.nhs.uk/111

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