4 PHASES OF CHOKING

** Guidelines to conceptualizing a choking emergency and thinking your way through it **

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PHASE 1: *"MINOR COUGH"* - MOVING AIR & CONSCIOUS

SIGNS: (WHAT YOU SEE/HEAR)

-Minor cough -No color change -No wheezing, stridor, high pitched noise
-No gagging -Can still speak -No difficulty breathing

FIRST AID:

-No first aid needed -No need to call 911/emergency number, typically, call if you are in need of help

-Coach, encourage, support the person to keep coughing

PHASE 2: *"FORCEFUL COUGH"* - MOVING AIR WITH *SOME DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY & CONSCIOUS*

SIGNS: (WHAT YOU SEE/HEAR)

-Forceful cough -Color change possible, slightly red, blue or pale -Possible wheezing, stridor, high pitched noise
-Possible gagging -Some difficulty speaking -Some difficulty breathing -Possibly embarrassment, anxiety

FIRST AID:

-First aid typically not needed -Coach, encourage, support the person to keep coughing -Definitely consider calling 911/emergency number -Be attentive to the person

-If Phase 2 becomes severe then consider choking first aid & calling 911/emergency number. This is a very difficult phase because this is the point where they may transition to Phase 3.

-Ask, "are you choking?" If they nod yes, tell them you are going to help them. Transition to Phase 3.

PHASE 3: *"NOT MOVING AIR"*, FULLY OBSTRUCTED AIRWAY, PERSON IS CHOKING, ***CONSCIOUS AND EYES OPEN***

-Ask, "are you choking?" If they nod yes, tell them you are going to help them. Provide Phase 3 choking first aid.

SIGNS: (WHAT YOU SEE/HEAR)

-NO coughing or gagging -NO speaking -NO *or VERY SLIGHT* wheezing, stridor, or high pitched noise
-Possibly holding throat with hand(s) -Color change, pale or bluish -Look of terror, fear & anxiety

FIRST AID:

-DEFINITELY call 911 or your emergency number

-Provide age appropriate/unique situation conscious choking first aid. Covered in the CFAC and by the AHA, Red Cross, & HSI in their CPR classes.

PHASE 4: *"NOT MOVING AIR"*, FULLY OBSTRUCTED AIRWAY, PERSON IS CHOKING, ***UNCONSCIOUS/UNRESPONSIVE***

SIGNS: (WHAT YOU SEE/HEAR)

-NO breathing, coughing, speaking or making sounds -Color pale, ashen or bluish -Limp, unresponsive, NOT moving

FIRST AID: -DEFINITELY call 911 or your emergency number

-Provide age appropriate/unique situation unconscious/unresponsive choking first aid. Covered in the CFAC and by the AHA, Red Cross, & HSI in their CPR classes.

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