

FOREIGN BODY INGESTION & CHOKING

As a parent you will undoubtedly worry if your child swallows something other than food. Usually, however, foreign body ingestion is harmless.

- The object should be passed within one to seven days.
- Coins (except for quarters or larger) will pass.
- Even pins, screws and glass do not usually present a problem. They generally do not cut or puncture the insides of the body.
- You should check every stool the child passes after the ingestion to look for the foreign object.

It is very frightening when a child begins to choke. Serious choking, however, is rare. It is best to try to prevent a choking before one occurs. Cut all foods into small pieces. Avoid giving foods such as grapes, nuts, popcorn, hot dogs and crispy crackers and cookies to small children. Remember to always keep small objects out of children's reach.

What to do if your child is choking:

- If you believe your child is choking and he is gagging and coughing, do nothing. Allow the child to cough up the object.
- If your baby is under two years old and is not breathing, is turning blue and is making no noise, you should administer three sharp blows with the heel of your hand between the baby's shoulder blades with the child lying head down on his stomach over your legs.
- If a child over two begins to choke, isn't breathing or making any noise, you should administer the Heimlich Maneuver. This is done by standing behind the child and putting your arms around him with your hands clasped together. Apply a firm, quick squeeze below his rib cage in an upward direction, then release. You can repeat this several times.
- If the Heimlich Maneuver does not work, try looking in your child's mouth and throat and try to pull the food or object out if you can see it.

When to call the doctor:

- If your child starts to cough, drool or wheeze or cannot swallow, call the doctor immediately.
- If a battery of any kind or size has been ingested, notify the doctor immediately.
- If an ingested object is not passed after 72 hours
- If abdominal pain, distension or vomiting occurs
- If you want advice