San Mateo County Emergency Medical Services Airway Obstruction/Choking

History

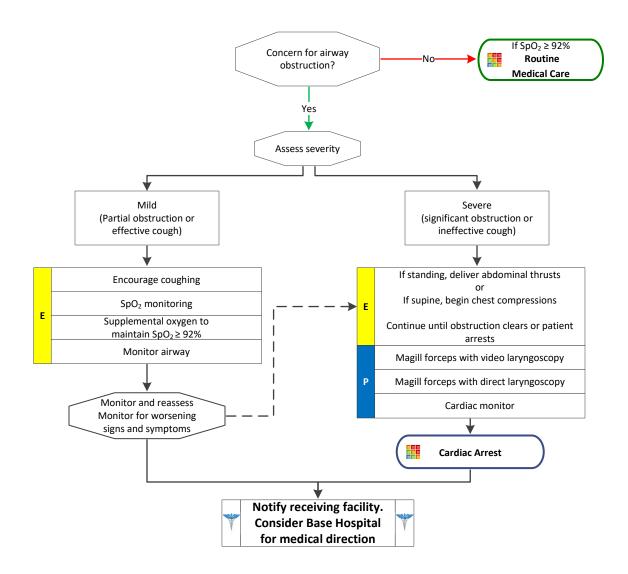
- · Sudden onset of shortness of breath/coughing
- Recent history of eating or food present
- History of stroke or swallowing problems
- · Past medical history
- · Sudden loss of speech
- Syncope

Signs and Symptoms

- · Sudden onset of coughing, wheezing or gagging
- Stridor
- · Inability to talk
- · Universal sign for choking
- Panic
- · Pointing to throat
- Syncope
- Cyanosis

Differential

- · Foreign body aspiration
- · Food bolus aspiration
- Epiglottitis
- Syncope
- Hypoxia
- Asthma/COPD
- CHF exacerbation
- Anaphylaxis
- · Massive pulmonary embolus



Pearls

- Bag valve mask can force the food obstruction deeper
- If unable to bag valve mask, consider a foreign body obstruction, particularly after proper airway maneuvers have been performed
- For obese and pregnant victims, put your hands at the base of their breastbones, right where the lowest ribs join together
- If foreign body is below cords and chest compressions fail to dislodge obstruction, consider intubation and forcing foreign body into right main stem bronchus.

