

Airway Obstruction/Choking

For any upper airway emergency including choking, foreign body, swelling, stridor, croup, and obstructed tracheostomy

History

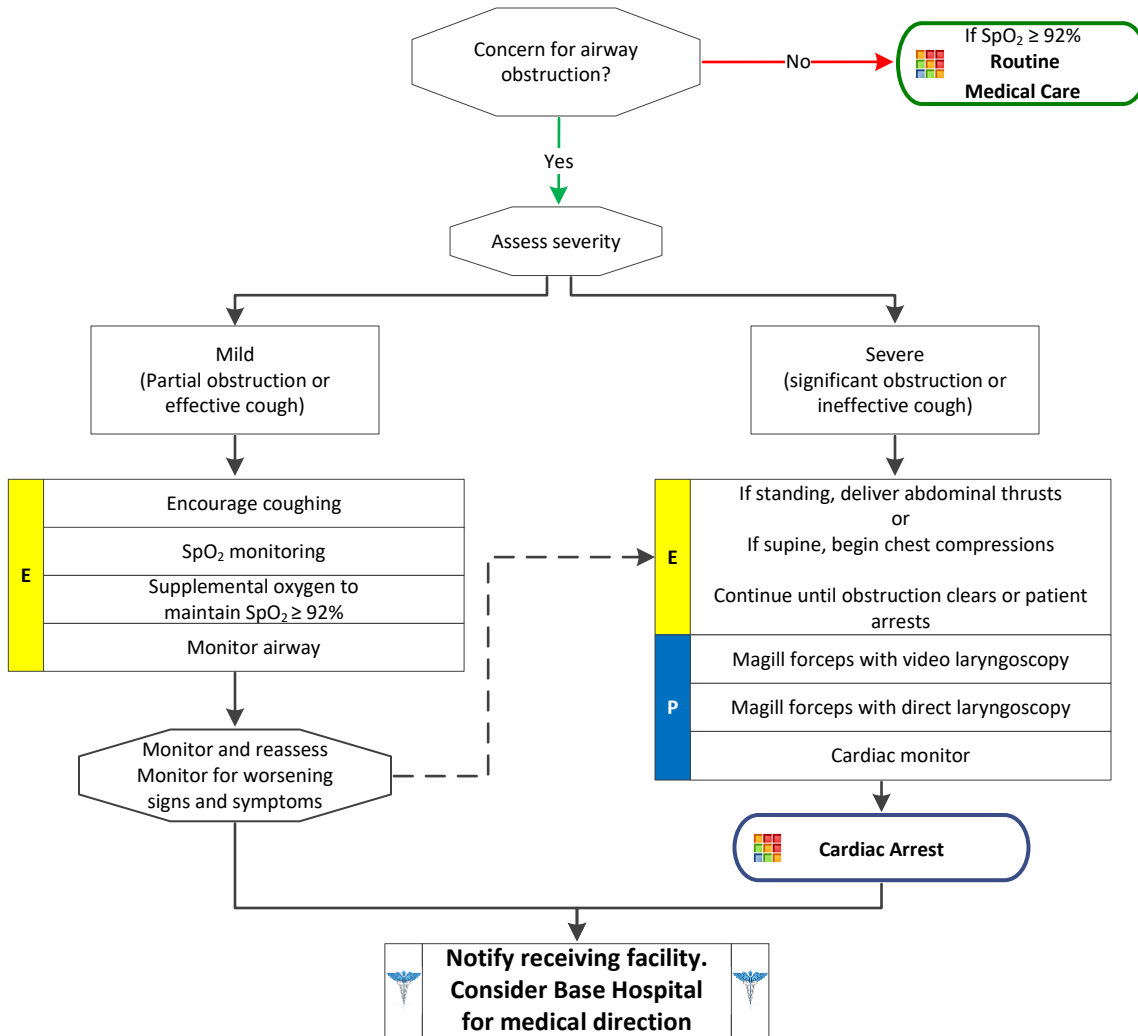
- Sudden onset of shortness of breath/coughing
- Recent history of eating or food present
- History of stroke or swallowing problems
- Past medical history
- Sudden loss of speech
- Syncope

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



Adult Respiratory Distress Treatment Protocols

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.