

WEEKLY SAFETY TIP – 2/22/10 – HOTDOG HEIMLICH FOR CHILDREN

Today, the American Academy of Pediatricians released a statement regarding the high incidence of children who choke, sometimes fatally, while eating hot dogs. The shape and size of the hot dogs allows improperly chewed pieces to stick in little throats. They are asking for warning labels to be placed on the packaging. (to see the full article, follow this link:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/hsn/20100222/hl_hsn/pediatricianswantredesignofhotdogscan_dytocurbkidschoking)

Warning labels are a good idea. However, many children put a variety of objects in their mouths, increasing the possibility of choking. You can't put a warning label on everything. But you can learn what to do if you suspect your child (or anyone, for that matter) is choking. It is a very simple procedure, and is recommended for anyone over the age of 1. Here are the simple steps that work for ages 1 – 101:

1. Determine if the person is choking by asking them. If they can answer verbally, they have an obstruction but are not in a life-threatening situation. If you think there is any air movement, try to have them cough. This is self-rescue, and is very effective. If they can't cough or there is no air movement, go to step 2.

2. Get behind them, wrapping your arms around them so that your hands are in front.

3. Make a fist of your hands, one over the other. Place them, thumb side in, slightly above the belly button and well below the breast bone.

4. Give quick upward thrusts into the abdomen until the object is dislodged.



If the object does not dislodge, or the person becomes unconscious, make sure that help is on the way via 9-1-1, and start CPR.

To read these procedures on the American Heart Association website, follow this link:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3025002>

Remember, if you are alone, and you are choking, try to cough to dislodge the object. If that does not work, you can use the side of a table, a stable chair that does not roll, or anything to administer your own abdominal thrusts.