

CHOKING DOG

What to Do If Your Dog Is Choking

What should you do if your dog is choking? When a person chokes, they do the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge the object blocking the airway. What can you do for a dog? Well, it is the same thing. When a dog is choking, you can do a modification of the Heimlich maneuver. Today, I'd like to give you some tips on how to do it. Hopefully you will never have to use it, but it's best to be prepared because you never know when it will happen to your dog.

Take a minute now to learn how to do the step-by-step procedure for dogs. It is fairly easy.

STEPS TO PERFORM THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER FOR DOGS:

- 1. After determining that your dog is choking, remove any item that may be constricting the neck. Examine inside the mouth and remove any foreign object you see. Do not blindly place your hand down your pet's throat and pull any object you feel. Dogs have small bones that support the base of their tongues. Owners probing the throat for a foreign object have mistaken these for chicken bones. Do not attempt to remove an object unless you can see and identify it. If your pet is small and you cannot easily remove the object, lift and suspend him with the head pointed down. For larger animals, lift the rear legs so the head is tilted down. This can help dislodge an item stuck in the throat. Another method is to administer a sharp blow between the shoulder blades using the palm of your hand. This can sometimes dislodge an object. If this does not work, a modified Heimlich maneuver can be attempted.*
- 2. Grasp the animal around the waist so that the rear is nearest to you, similar to a bear hug.*
- 3. Place a fist just behind the ribs.*
- 4. Compress the abdomen several times (usually 3-5 times) with quick pushes.*
- 5. Check the mouth to see if the foreign object has been removed.*

This maneuver can be repeated one to two times, but if it is not successful on the first attempt, make arrangements to immediately take your pet to the nearest veterinary hospital. Even if you are successful in removing a foreign object, veterinary examination is recommended. Internal injury could have occurred that may not be apparent.

I hope this never happens to your dog, but if it does, I hope that this information will help save your dog.