


Care for foreign body airway obstruction (OVACE) during infant food introduction

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2024.007-033>

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ABSTRACT

According to the guidelines of the agency that regulates health worldwide, it is recommended that breastfeeding be the only nutrition until the baby's first six months and potentiating until the age of two years or infant acceptance, the introduction of additional foods is suggested concomitantly (Brazilian Society of Pediatrics, 2021).

Keywords: Health, Foreign body airway obstruction, Infant.

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INTRODUCTION

According to the guidelines of the agency that regulates health worldwide, it is recommended that breastfeeding be the only nutrition until the baby's first six months and potentiating until the age of two years or infant acceptance, the introduction of additional foods is suggested concomitantly (Brazilian Society of Pediatrics, 2021).

Human evolution takes place in a healthy way through several hereditary and routine principles, such as environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic, where family nutrition becomes fundamental for human development (Leão et al., 2022).

Appropriate nutrition should be extended to any child, regardless of origin, ethnicity or group, considering the demands of each one, as healthy habits are maintained throughout childhood and in all periods and cycles of life, prioritizing natural and less processed foods being inserted in the ideal consistency and cut for the child's age (Ministry of Health, 2019).

The flavors are propagated from maternal nutrition towards the liquid that surrounds the baby during pregnancy, promoting protection against thermal and mechanical shocks, and to breast milk, so mothers who enjoy a variety of correct foods and a more accentuated and non-sweet palate during pregnancy and lactation provide newborns with the ability to develop a taste for these flavors, favoring the introduction of food at weaning, this factor is proven by studies and named it the "Flavor Theory" (Leão et al., 2022).

Breastfeeding establishes an emotional, physical and nutritional bond between mother and child as well as the child's cognitive development. Breastfeeding shows several benefits for the mother, such as faster postnatal uterine involution, increased catabolism of body fat and prevents several diseases, and for babies, reducing neonatal morbidity and mortality, lower percentage of sepsis, diarrhea and respiratory infections. Promoting and supporting breastfeeding promotes economic and environmental advantages for children, women, and society (Leite et al., 2020).

Foreign body airway obstruction, known as OVACE, is a significant public health problem in the pediatric sector. The Brazilian Society of Pediatrics of the State of Rio de Janeiro released the results of research carried out between 2009 and 2019, on the number of deaths that have been reported due to choking in children aged 0 to 9 years, which was 2,148 deaths in the country. In total, 72% were in babies under one year old, and 21.6% with children between one and four years old (Margareth Buzetti, 2022).

Teaching in childhood is the first level of school education, being offered in daycare centers and preschools, which is established with the aim of caring for and instructing children within the age group of 0 to 5 years. In this cycle, the focus is on the physical, psychic, rational and social evolution of the child, being an addition to family activities. During childhood, there is the movement of children at different stages of life and with numerous peculiarities, increasing the likelihood of



incidents. Thus, paying attention to the public assisted in schools, it is essential that all employees are qualified to assist at times when there is an imminent risk of death (Garbuio et al., 2020).

At the present time, Brazil has the Lucas Law (Law No. 13,722, of October 4, 2018) in force, which implements the requirement of public and private institutions aimed at teaching and entertainment for children, carrying out training for teachers and guardians, in basic knowledge of first aid. The urgency to establish this law was after a 10-year-old male child, Lucas Begalli, died on a school trip that was present, when he ate a snack and had a mechanical asphyxiation that happened in minutes, and there was no responsible person trained to perform first aid until the arrival of the ambulance (Rodrigues et al., 2022).

The syndrome, which is the set of signs and symptoms, presented by children in OVACE is very oscillating and depends on the level of airway obstruction. One of the essential reasons to be highlighted is the location and size of the aspirated foreign body and the age group of the child, which can progress to respiratory failure (Sousa et al., 2020).

In cases of witnessing choking, the majority of the population does not know how to identify and differentiate a total or partial obstruction, allowing late recognition to cause a picture of progressive hypoxia until the onset of a cardiopulmonary arrest (CPA), requiring immediate intervention with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) maneuvers (Santos et al., 2019).

Therefore, further studies and publications are needed on this extremely important topic for prevention and, when unavoidable, for immediate intervention, thus minimizing the complications of OVACE and even distancing the possibility of death.

METHODOLOGY

FOOD INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, according to the data of the safe child, choking accidents have been in first place, causing a high rate of death in babies in their first year of life. It has a higher number and very frequently in children aged 3 months, under four years and under twelve years (Conceição et al., 2021).

The child should be exclusively breastfed until 6 months of age, without any other food or water, as breast milk provides all the needs. After 6 months, the introduction of some fresh foods begins, which will help in their development and growth. It is very important to know what to offer, as some foods can lead the child to choke and suffocate. From 6 months the child begins to develop chewing movements, even without having the first teeth, the development of flavors, textures, smell and colors of food begins, thus helping in the growth and development of the child. (Ministry of Health, 2019)tag.



That is why we must be aware of how we should introduce food in children to avoid choking, according to the Department of Nutrology of the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics (SBP) we should introduce mashed foods and with the spoon, and also let them experience contact with food to feel the texture of the food and develop the motor and sensory part and always putting them in appropriate sizes according to their age (Brazilian Society of Pediatrics, 2021).

Food should be introduced mashed, fruits should be scraped. The child between the age group of 9 and 11 months can already introduce chopped foods. As for children between 1 and 2 years old, they can already be eating like the whole family, being encouraged to eat alone and with a lot of observation. One of the foods that we should not offer to children under 2 years old is popcorn, it has a more hardened texture. Peanuts, chestnuts and walnuts should be introduced crushed and never whole, One of the consequences of OVACE are food-based foods that are not suitable for age, such as the foods mentioned above (Ministry of Health, 2019 apud Lima et al., 2020).

Babies may also experience choking during and after breastfeeding. We can easily identify through the mother's report and lack of movement, in addition to signs of cyanosis on the skin (CBMERJ, 2019).

FOREIGN BODY AIRWAY OBSTRUCTION (OVACE)

OVACE is the term used in the hospital area that stands for Foreign Body Airway Obstruction. It is considered a worrisome occurrence that can happen at any age, being frequent in children from 0 to 6 years old, as it is the phase that involves the introduction of food and also begins the preschool phase (Amaral et al., 2023).

Commonly known as choking, OVACE is a condition that requires caution and prudence, especially in the educational environment, where children are kept full-time and are fed in this place. It is extremely important that all employees of the institution are trained in notions of first aid, since they need to be trained for any complication that occurs (Alexandre José Silva, 2020).

Here in Brazil, grain foods are among the villains when it comes to choking, however, we cannot fail to mention that toys, coins, including bladders, cause prominent risks in children who are in the cycle of crawling and putting everything in their mouths, proceeding to the development of their sensory system (Jonge et al., 2020).

We classify OVACE into two types: Partial Obstruction (Mild) or Total Obstruction (Severe). Partial **obstruction**, there is still air passage through the epiglottis and the victim is able to speak and call for help. The person presents with cough with discomfort and dyspnea. In these cases, try to calm her down, ask the victim to cough hard in an attempt to expel the object or food. **In Total Obstruction**, the victim is unable to respond, cough or even breathe, leading to unconsciousness, caused by asphyxiation and if not helped immediately, can lead to death. There is a universal sign



that is also observed in these cases: When the victim is obstructed, he stands up and points to his neck, signaling suffocation. Therefore, we can be suspicious of an OVACE. In this case, you should call the Mobile Emergency Care Service - SAMU (192) and people on site who are qualified, perform the choking or clearance maneuver (Heimlich maneuver) (Amaral et al., 2019).

One way to reduce the number of deaths from OVACE is to promote health education for lay people who somehow care for and work with the children's group, who choking cases are more frequent. In addition to education in the introduction of food in childhood, professionals should be prepared for the need for emergencies, such as the clearance maneuver and basic life support (Costa et al., 2019).

DESCRIPTION OF THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER

The Heimlich maneuver or choking maneuver was developed by the American physician Henry Heimlich in 1974, and has greater relevance in the prehospital environment for airway clearance caused by a foreign body (Jaqueline Silva, 2019).

The strategy for degassing is the most appropriate for foreign body aspiration, since this action tends to reduce complications arising from the circumstance, as it is contraindicated to remove objects manually, as it can lead to partial or total obstruction of the respiratory system (Melo et al., 2019).

The reasons for airway obstruction in children can cause them to present signs and symptoms such as respiratory distress with stridor or wheezing, aphasia, cyanosis, asphyxiation raising the hands to the neck and later worsening to unconsciousness (Monteiro et al., 2019).

Infants are highly likely to choke on reflux after breastfeeding or regurgitation. In these situations, choking interventions must be performed quickly, positioning the baby in the prone position on the forearm of the actor with the head lower than the entire body, supporting it through the jaw, it is necessary to apply 5 slaps on the back through the middle of the scapulae in the direction of the exit of the foreign body, after the five slaps, Place the child in the supine position on the other forearm and perform five compressions in the thoracic region and then observe if there is still the presence of any foreign body or secretion. If, after the entire procedure, the victim does not show any reaction, call for professional help and start cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) maneuvers (CBMERJ, 2019).

In the case of school-age children, one should be behind them hugging, place one hand closed (similar to a punch) and the other on the first, exerting a force on the diaphragm (at the level of the epigastrium) in an upward direction, so that the artifact is moved out of the airway, allowing the return of the breathing pattern (Silva et al., 2019).



RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Nowadays, according to the data of the safe child, choking accidents have been in first place, causing a high rate of death in babies in their first year of life. It has a higher number and very frequently in children aged 3 months, under four years and under twelve years of age (Conceição et al., 2021).

The high frequency of deaths in children from suffocation is determined by the ease with which children bring objects to their mouths and the inability to communicate if they need help. Added to this is the fact that younger children have anatomical structures that are still developing according to growth.

Negligence related to foreign body accidents continues to be present in the country at high rates due to the lack of preparation of health professionals, as well as educators, since children spend most of their time in daycare centers and schools.

The child should be exclusively breastfed until 6 months of age, without offering any other food or water, as breast milk provides all the needs. After 6 months, the introduction of some fresh foods begins, which will help in their development and growth. It is very important to know what to offer, as some foods can lead the child to choke and suffocate. From 6 months the child begins to develop chewing movements, even without having the first teeth, the development of flavors, textures, smell and colors of food begins, thus helping in the growth and development of the child. (Ministry of Health, 2019).

Breastfeeding promotes bonding, protection and nutrition for the child, in addition to becoming an economical and efficient practice with the objective of reducing infant morbidity and mortality. It also allows an influence on the promotion of the health of the mother and baby binomial.

The Family Health Strategy has established itself as one of the most important structures of the Unified Health System (SUS), greatly facilitating the population's access to health actions. To this end, policies and programs such as the National Health Promotion Policy (PNPS) were created; National Primary Care Policy (PNAB); National Food and Nutrition Policy (PNAN); National Policy for the Promotion, Protection and Support of Breastfeeding; and the Stork Network.

That is why we must be aware of how we should introduce food in children to avoid choking, according to the Department of Nutrology of the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics (SBP) we should introduce mashed foods and with a spoon, and also let them experience contact with food to feel the texture of the food and develop the motor and sensory part and always placing them in appropriate sizes according to their age (Weffort. et al., 2021).

It is part of the child's development to offer fresh or minimally processed foods, but some foods are already known as villains for causing suffocation in children in this first stage of food introduction. I believe that foods such as grapes, apples, popcorn can wait a little longer to be offered,



preferably after the child already has all the teeth formed, thus preventing the food from being eaten whole, and may have already been shredded, reducing the risk of choking at this age.

I would also like to point out that, according to the World Health Organization, there has been an increase of up to 40% in cases of suffocation in children under 3 years of age, caused by objects that the child takes in his mouth. Many toys that seem harmless can loosen parts and textures that can bring danger to this child. We know that this is a phase of discovery and children take everything they see in front of them to their mouths, and because they do not have the complete dentition for chewing, they end up ingesting these objects and can reach asphyxiation by a foreign body.

Moments when the little ones begin to crawl and even walk are also reasons for attention, because at mealtime they usually run around the house with food in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking.

Food should be introduced mashed and fruits should be scraped. The child between the age group of 9 and 11 months can already introduce chopped foods. As for children between 1 and 2 years old, they can already be eating like the whole family, being encouraged to eat alone and with a lot of observation. One of the foods that we should not offer to children under 2 years old is popcorn, it has a more hardened texture. Peanuts, chestnuts and walnuts should be introduced crushed and never whole, One of the consequences of OVACE are food-based foods that are not suitable for age, such as the foods mentioned above (Ministry of Health, 2019 apud Lima et al., 2020).

The introduction of food needs to be done gradually according to each child, respecting the stages of the babies, as each one has a different adaptation from the other. Some accept food better when it is crushed or mashed; others already have a better adaptation when they are offered in a solid way. The important thing is to be aware of the types of food we are offering, in this first phase babies need nutrients to develop in a healthy and safe way.

Some foods are dangerous to be offered before 2 years of age, due to the risk of choking even when they are crushed, especially the oilseed group because they have a very rigid shell, where the greatest risk of OVACE occurs.

Babies may also experience gagging during and after breastfeeding. We can easily identify through the mother's report and lack of movement, in addition to signs of cyanosis on the skin (CBMERJ, 2019).

Even with all the evidence about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, in addition to government mobilizations, the prevalence of breastfeeding in Brazil is much lower than the suggestions, and the health professional has an essential role in reviewing this situation. Therefore, it is up to the health professional to understand the sociocultural and family situation, taking care of the mother/baby pair, as well as the family, in addition to promoting emotional support and providing qualified and comprehensive care.



Table 01 - Specifications of the emphases of the chosen studies, 2023.

YEAR	THEME	AUTHOR	OBJECTIVE
2021	Practical feeding guide for children from 0 to 5 years old	Sociedade Brasileira de Pediatria	Highlight the importance of infant feeding
2022	Formation of eating habits in early childhood	LEÃO, J. I. S., et al.	Report on aspects of human development
2019	Food guide for Brazilian children under 2 years old	Ministério da Saúde	Understand the relevance of food in all social groups
2020	Benefits of breastfeeding for women and newborns	LEITE, A. C., et al.	Identify the advantages of breastfeeding
2022	Bill No. 2275	Margareth Buzetti	Alert society about cases of OVACE and provide for prevention measures
2020	Health education: effectiveness of training for early childhood education staff on OVACE	GARBUIO, D. C., et al.	Highlight the importance of first aid training for educators
2022	First aid in the school context: importance of the Lucas Law for teachers	RODRIGUES, A. O., et al.	Highlight about the Lucas Law in educational institutions
2020	Pediatric Emergencies in OVACE	SOUSA, A. L., et al.	Alert about the signs and symptoms that children may experience during OVACE
2019	Perception of early childhood education employees about OVACE	SANTOS, E. M., et al.	Report on the need to be knowledgeable about CPR maneuvers
2019	Parents' knowledge of procedures performed in the face of choking in the child	MELO, A. A., et al.	Provide guidance on contraindicated actions in cases of OVACE
2019	Training for choking relief and sudden death prevention	MONTERIO, C. R. M., et al.	Identify key signs and symptoms to prevent infant mortality



2019	Airway obstruction due to a foreign body	CBMERJ	Explain the step-by-step CPR maneuver for infants
2019	First aid	SILVA, A. C., et al.	Dissertation on the infant CPR maneuver
2020	Knowledge of early childhood education professionals about OVACE	JONGE, A. L., et al.	Highlight the foods and objects that cause the most OVACE
2019	Characterization of cases of accidental death of children due to aspiration of a foreign body	AMARAL, J. B., et al.	Report the characteristics regarding the classifications of the types of OVACE
2020	OVACE and PCR: first aid learning for the elementary school community	SILVA, A. J., et al.	Analyze the importance of courses on this topic
2019	Airway obstruction in infants	COSTA, M. M., et al.	Understand the educational methods in order to reduce the cases of OVACE
2023	First aid in the face of OVACE situations in children	AMARAL, M. S., et al.	Define what is Foreign Body Airway Obstruction
2021	Choking in children and infants: an integrative review	CONCEIÇÃO, N. O. S., et al.	Analyze the percentage of children affected
2019	OVACE	CBMERJ	Identify the moments that can cause child choking

OVACE is the term used in the hospital area that stands for Foreign Body Airway Obstruction. It is considered a worrisome occurrence that can happen at any age, being frequent in children from 0 to 6 years old, as it is the phase that involves the introduction of food and also begins the preschool phase (Oliveira et al., 2021).

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the introduction of food should be carried out with the help of professionals and under the continuous supervision of the minor's guardian.



Commonly known as choking, OVACE is a condition that requires caution and prudence, especially in the educational environment, where children are kept full-time and are fed in this place. It is extremely important that all employees of the institution are trained in notions of first aid, since they need to be trained for any complication that occurs (Alexandre José Silva, 2020).

Nowadays due to the need for work, especially after SARS-COVID 2019 that significantly increased the number of unemployed people, those who have a job and need to take care of their minor children, often use public and/or private daycare centers.

Due to the increase in this service, it is important to prepare these professionals to prevent CAO and simultaneously prepare them to act in the face of an OVACE if it occurs. Thus, minimizing the risks of sequelae and/or death of the child.

Here in Brazil, grain foods are among the villains when it comes to choking, however, we cannot fail to mention that toys, coins, including bladders, cause prominent risks in children who are in the cycle of crawling and putting everything in their mouths, proceeding to the development of their sensory system (Jonge et al., 2020).

Children have much smaller airways (mouth, throat, esophagus, and trachea) than adults, so foods and objects of insignificant size can completely obstruct the entry of air into the lungs if they accidentally get stuck in the throat.

Due to the dentition being smaller and incomplete, it makes it difficult to chew and grind food, which causes difficulty in swallowing, when because they are developing children they are little experienced in coordinating chewing and swallowing.

We classify OVACE into two types: Partial Obstruction (Mild) or Total Obstruction (Severe). Partial **obstruction**, there is still air passage through the epiglottis and the victim is able to speak and call for help. The person presents with cough with discomfort and dyspnea. In these cases, try to calm her down, ask the victim to cough hard in an attempt to expel the object or food. **In Total Obstruction**, the victim is unable to respond, cough or even breathe, leading to unconsciousness, caused by asphyxiation and if not helped immediately, can lead to death. There is a universal sign that is also observed in these cases: When the victim is obstructed, he stands up and points to his neck, signaling suffocation. Therefore, we can be suspicious of an OVACE. In this case, you should call the Mobile Emergency Care Service - SAMU (192) and people on site who are qualified, perform the choking or clearance maneuver (Heimlich maneuver) (Amaral et al., 2019).

Agreeing with Amaral et al., asphyxia is the third leading cause of death or, when it does not occur, it results in numerous neurological sequelae due to lack of oxygenation in the brain.

Therefore, a lack of preparation and lack of knowledge when helping the victim can be fatal, parents and family members should seek knowledge to know what to do at the time of choking, enabling the identification of the signs that can save the victim's life.



One way to reduce the number of deaths from OVACE is to promote health education for lay people who somehow care for and work with the children's group, who choking cases are more frequent. In addition to education in food introduction in childhood, professionals should be prepared for the need for emergencies, such as the clearance maneuver and basic life support (Costa et al., 2020).

Costa et al., primarily affirm that knowledge can prevent premature death, due to the preparation of the team that works with early childhood education. In cases of airway obstruction in children, especially in the introduction of food and preschool.

Basic life support (BLS) provides measures aimed at reducing the harm or risk of death associated with (CPA), and can be used by educated legal persons or professionals. The BLS guides support measures for victims until the arrival of efficiently qualified rescuers.

The strategy for degassing is the most appropriate for foreign body aspiration, since this action tends to reduce complications arising from the circumstance, as it is contraindicated to remove objects manually, as it can lead to partial or total obstruction of the respiratory system (Melo et al., 2019).

The removal of a foreign body, be it food or object, that has caused a choking in the child, both through the upper and lower airways is always a great risk for the victim.

Seeing that at the time of the incident, in cases of desperation, people usually try to remove it with their fingers, in this attempt we have already lost time and may still lead to the victim's death. The proper way to safely remove this foreign body is through the Heimlich maneuver. It is necessary and important to have knowledge among the population and education professionals, clarifying how to act and how to perform the Heimlich maneuver.

The reasons for airway obstruction in children can cause them to present signs and symptoms such as respiratory distress with stridor or wheezing, aphasia, cyanosis, asphyxiation raising the hands to the neck and later worsening to unconsciousness (Monteiro et al., 2019).

It is necessary to pay attention to the signals, that is, a perception and know how to act when observing these symptoms, such as respiratory distress with a stridor sound, which is characterized by a high-pitched sound with wheezing.

The victim has aphasia, because she cannot verbalize, she is unable to talk about what is happening soon, she is not able to breathe due to asphyxiation. If the victim does not breathe, there will be no circulation of blood, consequently it will prevent blood from circulating and reaching the extremities, so the victim will have cyanosis on the face, skin, lips and nails.

The desperation and agony in the intention to ask for help, the victim raises his hands to his neck thus signaling that something prevents him from breathing and verbalizing, so the aggravation of unconsciousness may occur, so the need to act quickly and correctly is identified.



Infants are highly likely to choke on reflux after breastfeeding or regurgitation. In these situations, choking interventions must be performed quickly, positioning the baby in the prone position on the forearm of the actor with the head lower than the entire body, supporting it through the jaw, it is necessary to apply 5 slaps on the back through the middle of the scapulae in the direction of the exit of the foreign body, after the five slaps, Place the child in the supine position on the other forearm and perform five compressions in the thoracic region and then observe if there is still the presence of any foreign body or secretion. If, after the entire procedure, the victim does not show any reaction, call for professional help and start cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) maneuvers (CBMERJ, 2019).

It is of great importance that not only the puerperal woman, but also the father, have knowledge about the Heimlich maneuver, since this knowledge would be presented to them both during prenatal care, and also being reinforced before leaving the maternity ward. The participation of the nurse in these two stages is of great importance, where he will lead the knowledge to the pregnant woman and soon after to this family.

Throughout this article, we can observe that it also occurs during breastfeeding, as it is an accident that mainly affects early childhood, that is, children up to 5 years of age, with the highest prevalence in children under 1 year of age. The child goes through the phase where everything leads to the mouth known as the discovery phase where both the mother and close people need to be attentive, in the sense of observing and knowing what to offer, when and how, from food as well as objects that are used with the functionality of distracting the child. This mother and family members will be able to deal with the situation correctly and in a well-informed manner.

In the case of school-age children, one should be behind them hugging, place one hand closed (similar to a punch) and the other on the first, exerting a force on the diaphragm (at the level of the epigastrium) in an upward direction, so that the artifact is moved out of the airway, allowing the return of the breathing pattern (Silva et al., 2019).

When faced with this situation, it is necessary to know how to act, quickly and effectively, because as we can see, time is crucial, along with the application of the maneuver correctly. Hence, the need for prior knowledge and training for both families and educators.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Thus, it is concluded from the work presented that Airway Obstruction by a foreign body is one of the major causes of morbidity and mortality, especially in children, both due to the beginning of airway development and the evolution in the ability to chew and also due to the curiosity to bring objects to the mouth. The researched texts corroborate that the lethality of accidents can be significant when the rescue is not carried out correctly and in a timely manner.



It is highlighted the need for adequate knowledge of first aid in schools and a look with educational value where professionals involved in the school can be caregivers with an integral aspect of health, in addition to the education of children.

It is also necessary to create awareness campaigns regarding proper nutrition at each stage of development and age-appropriate toys should be out of the reach of children.