

National Hot Dog Month



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July is National Hot Dog Month! Hot dog eating contests are held all across the country with one of the most iconic being Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest. Joey "Jaws" Chestnut beat out his competitors yet again on July 4th with a whopping 74 hot dogs and buns! Although these contests are certainly entertaining, they come with inherent risk.

Eating contests are usually carried out in a controlled environment with a medical team on stand-by. But what about your everyday hot dog eaters? Hot dogs tend to be a fan favorite for children's birthday parties, backyard barbecues and minimal effort dinners.

Hot dogs are often viewed as "kid-friendly" treats. However, they are a leading cause of injury and death among young children. Due to its shape and size, a hot dog can quickly become a choking hazard for adults and children alike.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), 1 child will die every 5 days in the United States due to choking on food. Hot dog inhalation ranks high among food choking hazards for young children, along with hard candy, grapes and nuts.

"If you were to design the perfect plug for a child's airway, you couldn't do much better than a hot dog," said Dr. Gary Smith, Professor of Pediatrics at the Ohio State University College of Medicine. "It will wedge itself in tightly and completely block the airway, causing the child to die within minutes because of lack of oxygen."

Parents and caregivers should avoid serving hot dogs to children younger than 4. Always cut hot dogs into smaller pieces to make it easier for children to swallow. Ensure children are supervised and are not permitted to run, play or lie down while eating.



If choking does occur, follow the steps below.



STEP 1

Ask the person, "Are you choking?"

If the person nods "yes" or is unable to speak, tell the person you are going to help. **DO NOT** leave.



STEP 2

Reach under the arms from behind.

Place your fist just above the navel, thumb side in. Grasp the fist with your other hand.



STEP 3

Perform quick, forceful abdominal thrusts in and up until the object comes out or the person becomes unresponsive.

Always call 911 if you are unable to help with a severe obstruction or if the person becomes unresponsive. If the person becomes unresponsive, lower him to the ground in a controlled fall and begin CPR.