



CHOKING

As summer time approaches and we all look forward to outdoor eating including barbecues, we would like to remind you of some significant choking issue for many of the people we serve. Even if a person does not have a documented choking risk, some foods place all of us at a greater risk

FOODS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH CHOKING

Meat is the leading cause of choking incidents and includes: hamburgers, hotdogs, sandwiches, ham, steak and chicken

- **As hot dogs in particular have been associated with choking incidents, it is recommended that only skinless hotdogs be served.** Those with skin require a stronger bite to break off a piece and thereby can result in too large a portion to chew. They are also harder to chew. Add a soft roll to the mix and the danger just increases. It is also recommended that **skinless hot dogs be sliced completely through lengthwise** before serving to those who do not have any special food texture requirements. This may help minimize the risk of choking as the bite will no longer be round and have the potential to block the airway entirely in a choking episode. 
- **Peanut butter lodged in the throat** is extremely difficult to remove. The combination of peanut butter and partially chewed or soft bread can create an obstruction which can block the airway and be fatal. 

Other foods that can present choking hazards include:

- pizza
- pasta
- grapefruit sections
- rice
- apples,
- bananas,
- pineapple chunks
- orange slices
- potatoes, particularly French fries
- grapes
- marshmallows
- potato chips/crackers

COMMON CAUSES OF CHOKING

- Eating too fast.
- Inattention to eating, distraction by other persons or activities.
- Lack of appropriate supervision.
- Placing too much food in one's mouth.
- Poor oral motor skills.
- Incorrect diet texture. If food is to be cut be sure it is in the appropriate size.
- Diet is not communicated from setting to setting or to new staff working with the individual.
- Eating something with two or more diet textures, especially anything with a thin liquid and a solid component such as cereal and milk or eating a hot dog and drinking a soft drink at the same time.