

## Choking prevention tips for parents

Many parents today are worried about the risk of choking when feeding their baby or young child.

Children are most at risk of choking when they are less than **four** years of age.

Remember to watch your baby or child when they are eating. Any food can cause a child to choke. However some foods are more unsafe than others.

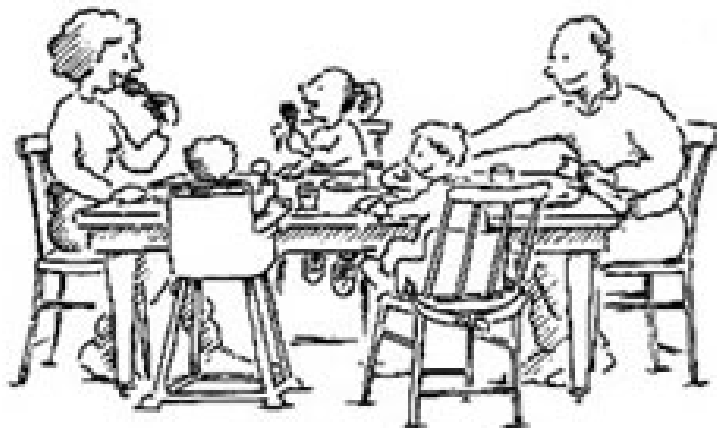


To lower the risk of choking, watch for foods that are:

- hard, small and round
- smooth and sticky or hard to chew, or
- do not melt quickly

Foods like that can get stuck in a baby's or child's throat. This will stop air from getting into their lungs.

**Gagging is not the same as choking. All babies and children gag at times. Babies and children gag to stop from choking.**



## Foods that can cause choking in babies and young children

- whole grapes, cherry or grape tomatoes, melon balls and olives
- fish with bones
- fruit with pits (like cherries)
- fruit with tough skins
- hard pieces of raw fruit or vegetables, like carrots and apples
- raisins
- popcorn
- peanut butter or other nut butters on a spoon or spread thickly
- foods held together with toothpicks or skewers
- chunks of meat or cheese
- hard chips (like nacho chips)
- whole nuts (alone or in foods)
- whole seeds (alone or in foods)
- wieners or hot dogs
- chewing gum
- hard cookies
- cough drops
- fruit leathers
- hard candies
- jujube-type candies
- mini jelly cups or jellied fruit

### Tips for feeding safely

- Cut grapes, melon balls, grape/cherry tomatoes and olives in half
- Cut wieners into **small** pieces
- Grate or cook carrots and other hard vegetables or fruit
- Spread peanut and nut butters **thinly** on toast or crackers
- Soak raisins in water to soften them
- Remove skins or pits from fruit and vegetables

### Tips to prevent choking

- Watch babies and children while they are eating, even snacks
- Make sure babies and young children are sitting upright, not walking, talking, laughing, running or lying down
- Make sure children chew their food well
- Give your child time to eat slowly and carefully, try not to hurry your child
- Be very careful with the foods you choose if feeding children in a car

Learn how to help a choking baby or child by taking an infant/child CPR class. Call York Region Health Services *Health Connection* or ask at your local Early Years Centre to find out about CPR classes.