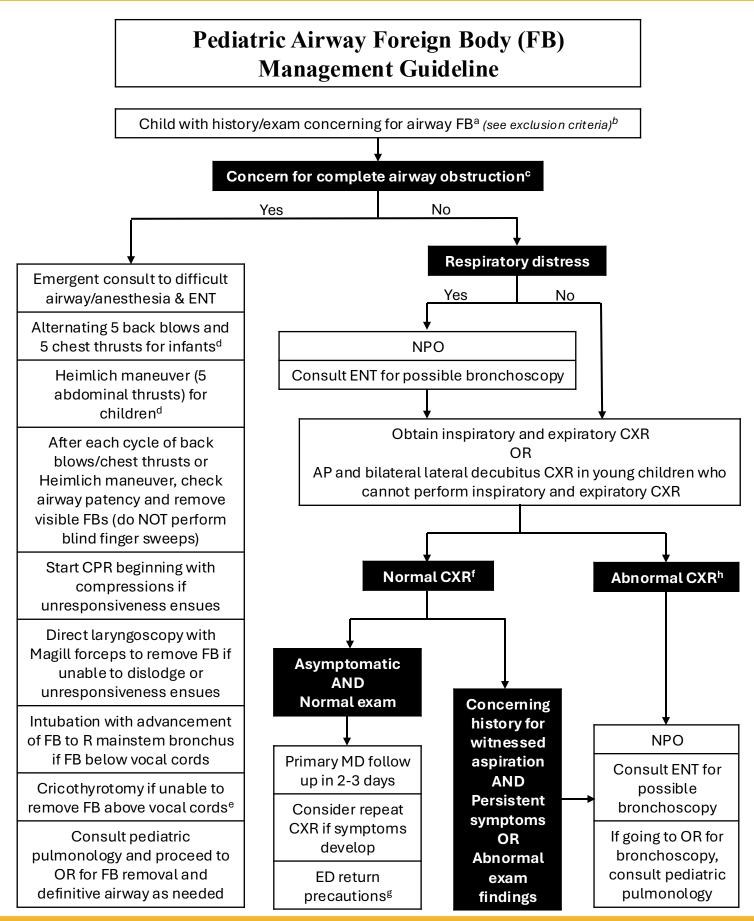


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Footnotes:

- a. Most common symptoms following aspiration of a FB are persistent coughing (most frequent), difficulty breathing, and wheezing. A history of a witnessed choking event is highly suggestive of acute aspiration with a sensitivity of up to 93%. The classic clinical triad (cough, focal wheeze, and decreased breath sounds) present in only 14% of patients.¹
- b. Exclusion criteria: adults > 18 years of age, known abnormal airway, tracheostomy
- c. Signs of complete upper airway (larynx or trachea) obstruction: sudden choking +/- vomiting, severe respiratory distress, inability to speak/cough, cyanosis, altered mental status progressing rapidly to unconsciousness and cardiopulmonary arrest²
- d. Back blows/chest thrusts and Heimlich maneuver should NOT be performed in children with partial upper airway obstructions (who can speak/cough) due to risk of turning a partial into a complete airway obstruction.^{1,2}
- e. Cricothyrotomy is recommended for airway FB above the vocal cords if unable to remove with Magill forceps. This procedure should be performed by ENT if possible:
 - a. Needle cricothyrotomy for children < 12 years²
 - b. Surgical cricothyrotomy for children >12 years²
- f. CXRs are frequently normal (30%) in the setting of aspirated FBs. Normal CXR does NOT rule out the presence of an aspirated FB as atelectasis/consolidation/air trapping is frequently not appreciable and many FBs are radiolucent.³
- g. ED return precautions: development of persistent cough or respiratory distress
- h. CXR findings suggestive of possible aspirated FB: visible radio-opaque FB, segmental or lobar consolidation or collapse/atelectasis, hyperinflation distal to obstruction causing air trapping, mediastinal shift³

References:

- 1. Shaw KN, et al. "Fleisher & Ludwig's Textbook of Pediatric Emergency Medicine, 7th Edition." Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2016.
- 2. Loftis L, et al. "Emergency evaluation of acute upper airway obstruction in children," UpToDate, 2024.
- 3. Ruiz FR, et al. "Airway foreign bodies in children," UpToDate, 2024.