

# Airway Manoeuvres: Head Tilt & Chin Lift

## Opening the Airway

The simplest way of ensuring an open airway in an unconscious infant or child, is to use a head tilt chin lift technique. This manoeuvre is contraindicated if there is concern of possible spinal injury. In these cases, a jaw thrust manoeuvre is recommended.

### Head tilt & chin lift - Infant

PRE MANOEUVRE



HEAD NATURALLY TILTING FORWARD  
DUE TO LARGE OCCIPUT



HEAD TILT & CHIN LIFT

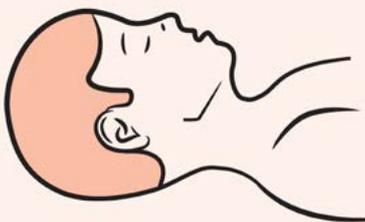
POST MANOEUVRE = CORRECT POSITION



NEUTRAL POSITION

### Head tilt & chin lift - Child

PRE MANOEUVRE



NEUTRAL POSITION



HEAD TILT & CHIN LIFT

POST MANOEUVRE = CORRECT POSITION



"SNIFFING" POSITION

#### Step 1:

Place a hand on the infant or child's forehead, gently tilt the head back into the correct position. Neutral for infants. Sniffing for children.

#### Step 2:

Perform a chin lift by placing fingers under the chin, lifting gently upwards, without pressing on the soft tissue below the mandible.

#### Tips in children

- A towel or bunny rug can be utilised for infants and toddlers, as a shoulder roll to counteract the flexion caused by their relatively larger head.



#### ALERT

Infants and children have narrower airways that are more easily obstructed by external compression. Ensure no external pressure is accidentally placed on the airway by hands or equipment.

Seek prompt senior nursing/medical advice for assistance in paediatric airway management.

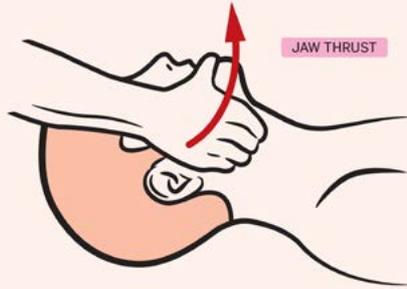


# Airway Manoeuvres: Jaw Thrust

## Opening the Airway

The simplest way of ensuring an open airway in an unconscious infant or child, is to use a head tilt chin lift technique. This manoeuvre is contraindicated if there is concern of possible spinal injury. In these cases, a jaw thrust manoeuvre is recommended.

### Jaw thrust



#### Step 1:

Place hands on either side of the infant or child's head.

#### Step 2:

Place 2-3 fingers at the angle of the jaw on both sides.

#### Step 3:

Then use fingers to gently lift upward and outward, without altering the position of the head.

### Tips in children

- When conducting a paediatric jaw thrust, placing the heels of your hands on the sides of the forehead can be helpful in stabilising the position of the head



### ALERT

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Seek prompt senior nursing/medical advice for assistance in paediatric airway management.

## For further information:

[Nursing Standard: Clinical Assessment of the Paediatric Patient – Rapid Assessment / Primary and Secondary Survey / Vital Signs \(QH only\)](#)

## References:

This Queensland Paediatric Emergency Nursing Skill Sheet was developed by the Emergency Care of Children working group (funded by the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel) with the help of the following resources:

Hazinski, M.F., Nursing Care of the Critically Ill Child. 3rd ed. 2013, St Louis: Elsevier Mosby Group., A.P.L.S., Advanced Paediatric Life Support. 5th ed. 2011, London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Kliegman, R., Stanton, B., Geme, J., Schor, N. & Behrman, R., Nelsons Textbook of Pediatrics. 20th ed. 2016, Philadelphia: Saunders Elsevier.

Queensland Health State wide ED Nurse Educator Committee, Pearson, N., Cole, T., & Carney, S. (Eds.). (2016). Unit 5 Respiratory. In Queensland Health: Transition Support Program - Emergency. Module 3 - Paediatric Care in the Emergency Department (4th ed., pp. 61–62). State of Queensland (Queensland Health).



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- Supporting consumer rights and informed decision making in partnership with healthcare practitioners including the right to decline intervention or ongoing management.
- Advising consumers of their choices in an environment that is culturally appropriate and which enables comfortable and confidential discussion. This includes the use of interpreter services where necessary.
- Ensuring informed consent is obtained prior to delivering care.
- Meeting all legislative requirements and professional standards.
- Applying standard precautions, and additional precautions as necessary, when delivering care.
- Documenting all care in accordance with mandatory and local requirements.

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