



Together, we can save a life

# *Background / Key Messages*

## Communication and Marketing

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### **Use of the Heimlich Maneuver First in Near-drowning Victims - August 2005**

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#### **Background**

Despite consensus, Henry J. Heimlich MD, who developed the maneuver to relieve choking victims, contends that in cases of near-drowning the Heimlich maneuver should be the first procedure attempted, before CPR. Dr. Heimlich contends that water gets into and obstructs the airway of near-drowning victims and that his maneuver will relieve this obstruction.

#### **Talking points**

American Red Cross position: The American Red Cross follows the the American Heart Association (AHA) Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Emergency Cardiac Care (ECC) guidelines which state that if a victim is not breathing, the rescuer should initiate CPR immediately. If the ventilation efforts do not make the victim's chest rise, the rescuer should attempt to clear the airway by using age-appropriate methods for relief of foreign body airway obstruction. These AHA CPR/ECC guidelines are supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Cardiology, the American College of Emergency Physicians and the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. For more information reference the full [Advisory Council on First Aid and Safety statement](#).