LifeVac: A Novel Apparatus to Resuscitate a Choking Victim

Introduction: Patients with upper aerodigestive dysfunction are at increased risk for choking which can be a leading cause of death in this population. Currently there are no methods to measure an individual’s risk if this dysfunction is not identified.

Methods: The LifeVac ™ Choking Chair simulates the postures designed specifically for training the EMT smoker-based seat exercise used in the initial training of a choking victim. The National Council on Fire Prevention (NCFP) panel of experts was then utilized to provide the product instruction manual’s setting to displaying the object and the frequency of displaying the object.

Results: Using several Choking Chairs with a hot dog piece inserted into the airway, LifeVac successfully rescues the object in 97% of attempts in one attempt, in 98% of attempts in two attempts, and was successful in 100% of attempts in three attempts. The 95% confidence interval for the probability of success (k) of the device (when defining success as removal in two or fewer attempts) was 95.8% ≤ k ≤ 99.8%.

Conclusion: LifeVac is a promising apparatus that is simple to use and appears to be an extremely effective methodology successfully addressing an object lodged in the airway of a choking victim. Further studies with the initial prospective studies in humans are warranted in the hopes of saving lives when the fireman responds.

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Figure 1.

Figure 2.