

Ingestion



Definition:

Ingestion or aspiration refers to the inhalation of solid or liquid materials, usually food, into the airways. This can lead to a blockage of the airways and subsequently to inflammation and infection of the airways.

Causes / risk factors:

The cough reflex:

- If foreign bodies get onto the ciliated epithelium of the trachea, they are transported upwards by coughing.
- Reflexes may be uncoordinated or incomplete up to the age of 6.

Comparison: Trachea of infant and adult

Teeth:

The teeth are not yet fully developed.



Situation:

Infant approx. 8 mm

Adult approx. 20 mm

- Children are often and easily distracted.
- Children put “almost everything” in their mouths.
- When eating (inappropriate food/swallowing/not chewing or not chewing enough)
- When playing (smelling/tasting/licking things)

Special risks

- Diseases (e.g. cerebral infarction, inflammation of the respiratory tract)
- disorders of consciousness

Preventive measures:

- Prepare food according to age.
- Do not leave food unattended.
- Always eat sitting down.
- Eat calmly and without haste.
- Choose toys and play materials that are age-appropriate.