

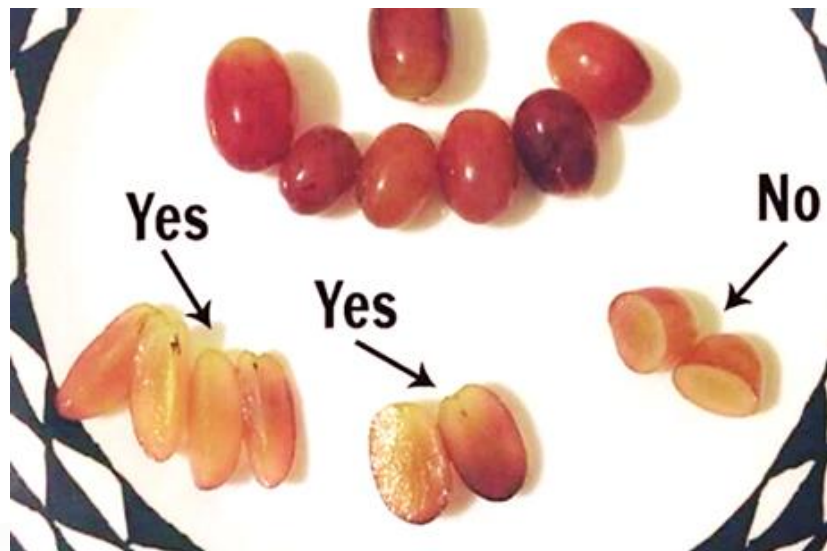
Choking in children

Important information for parents and carers

Grapes can completely plug a child's airway. Research suggests that they are the third most common cause of death in food-related incidents.

Young children or children with swallowing difficulties can easily choke on small foods. Particular foods which mostly commonly cause choking are grapes and cherry tomatoes. They are round, slightly malleable and easy to swallow whole. If a grape gets stuck in the airway, it can block the airflow completely and is almost impossible to remove. This then becomes an emergency situation and has been fatal in some cases.

It has been suggested that all grapes should be cut in half lengthways and all foods should be cut into small pieces for your child. It is also advised to always stay with your child whilst they are eating. Encourage them to sit still, as movement whilst eating could make them choke.



If you suspect a child is choking, look for signs such as difficulty in breathing and distressed arm movements. The child may have a flushed face and neck or become pale and blue.

If your child is coughing, airflow is passing the lodged food and will usually be enough to expel it. If they are making strange noises or no sound at all, this is an emergency situation. Commence back blows, chest thrusts and call for an ambulance.

We ask that parents please ensure that all grapes and tomatoes sent into school are sliced lengthways to avoid choking hazards.

Thank you!