

# An Adult Case of Acute Epiglottitis with Cardiopulmonary Arrest due to an Upper Airway Obstruction

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**Abstract :** We herein report a case of cardiopulmonary arrest caused by an acute, epiglottitis-associated upper airway obstruction in an adult who could not be resuscitated, despite the fact that emergency surgical airway control was performed. The patient was a 34-year-old male who complained of aggravated dyspnea about 12 hours after the onset of pharyngeal pain. An ambulance was called and cardiopulmonary arrest occurred immediately after the patient was brought into the ambulance. When the larynx was exposed immediately after arrival at our hospital, a walnut-sized soft tissue mass was noted, and the glottis could not be directly visualized. Oral endotracheal intubation was considered difficult, and a surgical cricothyroidotomy was therefore immediately performed for airway control. Resuscitation was continued, but the patient could not be resuscitated. After death was confirmed, a swollen epiglottis was observed by bronchoscopy. Although emergency airway control, including the surgical approach, is prioritized in the treatment of serious cases, no useful method is yet available for use by prehospital care personnel. It is therefore important to educate the general public of the necessity to visit medical institutions before such an aggravation occurs.

**Key words :** Acute epiglottitis, Upper airway obstruction, Cardiopulmonary arrest, Cricothyroidotomy