

# Strangulation and/or Suffocation

## Discharge Information

Because you have reported pressure applied to your neck and/or difficulty breathing, we are providing you with some important discharge information.

- After a choking, strangulation and/or suffocation assault, victims can experience **delayed symptoms** of internal injuries.
- Symptoms of internal injuries may appear quickly or develop over a few days after the event. **Internal injuries can be serious and even fatal.**
- It is important that someone you trust stays with you for **the next 24–72 hours** to help you monitor your signs and symptoms.
- We recommend you keep a **list of your symptoms** to share with your healthcare provider and advocate.

*(Internal) The individual filling out the form should check off items discussed with the patient as part of their discharge. Written discharge instructions should be provided to all patients. Please check all the following actions that apply:*

- Reviewed after-care instructions and strangulation warning signs       Referred to primary care in \_\_\_\_\_ days for follow up
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_       Provided resource handouts and phone numbers
- \_\_\_\_\_       Safety plan reviewed

The **National Domestic Violence Hotline** number is **1-800-799-SAFE (3722)** or get help without saying a word at <https://www.thehotline.org/>

Please follow up with DVHP or Safe Alliance to talk to a confidential victim advocate about your **options and safety planning** by calling:

704-446-3999 (DVHP) or 704-332-2513 (Safe Alliance)

If you have questions about your **legal case**, please contact the police department, officer involved, prosecutor or victim witness advocate by calling:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Forensic Nurse**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Office Phone**

**704-355-5865 or 704-355-5902**



# Emergency Care Required

If you notice any of the following symptoms, PLEASE **CALL 911** or go right away to the nearest **EMERGENCY ROOM**:

- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent cough or coughing up blood
- Loss of consciousness or “passing out”
- Changes in your voice, difficulty speaking, or understanding speech
- Difficulty swallowing, feelings of a lump in your throat or a muscle spasm in your throat or neck
- Swelling to your throat, neck, or tongue
- Increased neck pain
- Weakness, numbness or tingling on the left or right side of your body
- Difficulty walking
- Headache, not relieved by pain medication
- Dizziness, lightheadedness or changes in vision
- Seizures
- Behavioral changes, memory loss, or confusion
- If you are having thoughts of harming yourself or others
- Drooping Eye Lid

If you are **PREGNANT**, report any of the following symptoms to your doctor **IMMEDIATELY**:

- Decreased baby movement
- Stomach pain

# Vaginal spotting or bleedings Normal Reaction

Sometimes the **PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS** of a traumatic event are:

- Trembling or shaking
- Stomach tightening or churning
- Pounding heart
- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Rapid breathing
- Cold sweats
- Lump in throat; feeling choked up
- Racing thoughts

Call **SAFE ALLIANCE** or **A FRIEND** to talk about your emotions and feelings.

If you notice some **bruising or mild discomfort**, apply ice to the sore areas for **20 minutes** at a time, **4 times** per day, for the first **2 days**.

If you go to the **EMERGENCY ROOM**, TAKE THIS PAPER WITH YOU and refer personnel to:

Metro Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner  
&  
Domestic Violence Healthcare Project