

## Strangulation Discharge Instructions

Because you have reported being “choked” or strangled, we are providing you with the following instructions:

**Make sure someone stays with you for the next 24-72 hours after this event.**

Health complications can appear immediately or may develop a few days after a strangulation event. Please call 911 or report immediately to the nearest emergency department if you notice any of the following:

- Problems breathing, difficulty breathing while lying down, shortness of breath, persistent cough or coughing up blood.
- Loss of consciousness or “passing out”.
- Changes in your voice, difficulty speaking or understanding speech.
- Difficulty swallowing, “a lump in your throat” or muscle spasms in your throat or neck.
- Swelling to your throat, neck or tongue.
- Increasing neck pain
- Left or right sided weakness, numbness, tingling or difficulty walking.
- Drooping eyelid.
- Headache not relieved by pain medication.
- Dizziness, lightheadedness or changes in your vision.
- Pinpoint red or purple dots on your face, neck or burst blood vessels in your eye.
- Seizures.
- Behavioral changes, memory loss or confusion.
- Thoughts of harming yourself or others.

If you are pregnant, report the strangulation and any of the following symptoms to your doctor immediately:

- Decreased movement of the baby.
- Vaginal spotting or bleeding.
- Abdominal pain.
- Contractions.

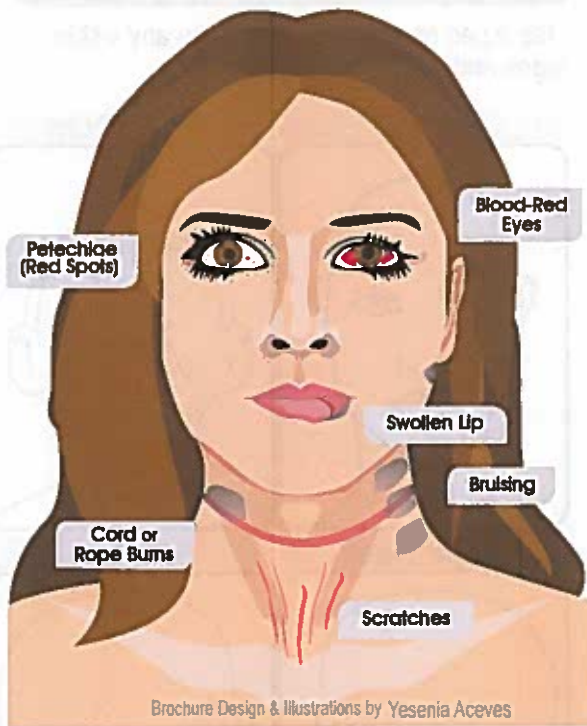
You may notice some bruising or mild discomfort. Apply ice to the sore areas for 20 minutes at a time, 4 times per day, for the first 2 days. If you notice new bruising or injury, follow up for additional photo documentation.

After your initial evaluation, keep a list of any changes in symptoms to share with your healthcare provider and your law enforcement contact. **It is important to have a follow up medical screening in 1-2 weeks with your healthcare provider.**

Forensic Nurse \_\_\_\_\_

# Strangulation

## Visible Signs



Brochure Design & Illustrations by Yesenia Aceves

## Observing Changes

Documentation by photographs sequentially for a period of days after the assault is very helpful in establishing a journal of physical evidence.

Victims should also seek medical attention if they experience difficulty breathing, speaking, swallowing or experience nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, headache, involuntary urination and/or defecation, especially pregnant victims. A medical evaluation may be crucial in detecting internal injuries and saving a life.

## Losing Consciousness

Victims may lose consciousness by any one or all of the following methods: blocking of the carotid arteries in the neck (depriving the brain of oxygen), blocking of the jugular veins (preventing deoxygenated blood from exiting the brain), and closing off the airway, making breathing impossible.

Strangulation has only recently been identified as one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence: *unconsciousness may occur within seconds and death within minutes.* When domestic violence perpetrators choke (strangle) their victims, not only is this a felonious assault, but it may be an attempted homicide. Strangulation is an ultimate *form of power and control*, where the batterer can demonstrate control over the victim's next breath; having devastating psychological effects or a potentially fatal outcome.

Sober and conscious victims of strangulation will first feel terror and severe pain. If strangulation persists, unconsciousness will follow. Before lapsing into unconsciousness, a strangulation victim will usually resist violently, often producing injuries of their own neck in an effort to claw off the assailant, and frequently also producing injury on the face or hands to their assailant. These defensive injuries may not be present if the victim is physically or chemically restrained before the assault.

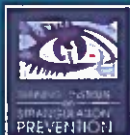


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## Additional Signs and Symptoms

A larger version of the graphic above which contains detailed signs and symptoms is available for download at <https://www.strangulationtraininginstitute.com/Esperanza>

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Facts Victims of  
Strangulation (Choking)  
**Need to Know**

## Monitor Your SIGNS

Date & Time

Journal Your Signs


## Monitor Your Symptoms

Date & Time

Journal Your Symptoms


Date & Time

Journal Any Other Sensation


## Signs of Strangulation

**Head-** pinpoint red spots (petechiae ) on scalp, hair pulled, bump(s), skull fracture, concussion.

**Face-** red or flushed, petechiae, scratch marks.

**Eyes and Eyelids-** petechiae to the left or right eyeball, bloodshot eyes.

**Ear-** petechiae (external and/or ear canal), bleeding from ear canal.

**Nose-** bloody nose, broken nose, petechiae.

**Mouth-** bruising, swollen tongue, swollen lips, cuts/abrasions.

**Under the chin-** redness, scratch marks, bruise(s), abrasions.

**Neck-** redness, scratch marks, fingernail impressions, bruise(s), abrasions, swelling, ligature marks.

**Chest and Shoulders-** redness, scratch marks, bruise(s), abrasions.

## Symptoms of Strangulation

**Voice changes-** raspy and/or hoarse voice, coughing, unable to speak, complete loss of voice.

**Swallowing changes-** trouble swallowing, painful swallowing, neck pain, nausea/vomiting, drooling.

**Breathing changes-** difficulty breathing, hyperventilation, unable to breathe.

**Behavioral changes-** restlessness or combativeness, problems concentrating, amnesia, agitation, Post-traumatic Stress Syndrome, hallucinations.

**Vision changes-** complete loss or black & white vision, seeing 'stars', blurry, darkness, fuzzy around the eyes.

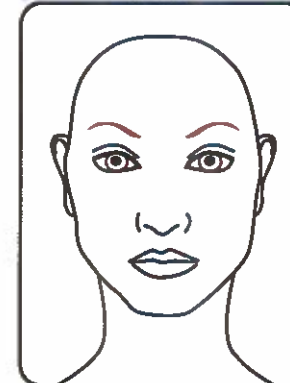
**Hearing changes-** complete loss of hearing, gurgling, ringing, buzzing, popping, pressure, tunnel-like hearing.

**Other changes-** Memory loss, unconsciousness, dizziness, headaches, involuntary urination or defecation, loss of strength, going limp.

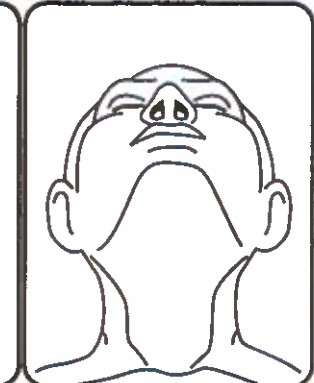
## Diagrams to Mark Visible Injuries

Use a pen or a marker to indicate any visible signs and/or symptoms.

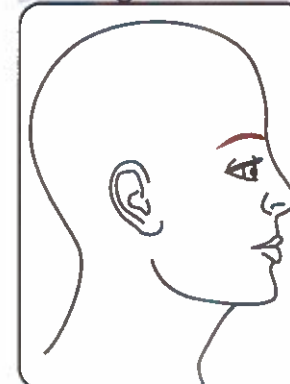
Front



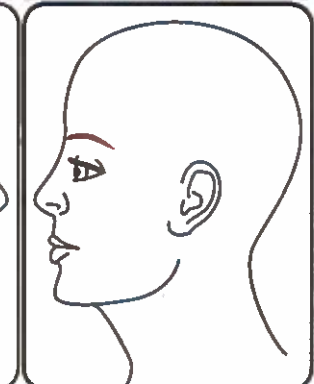
Under Chin



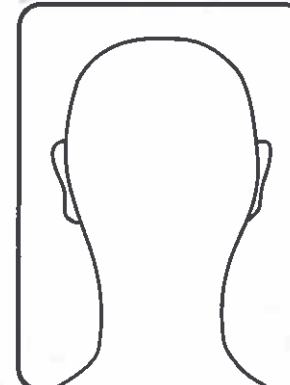
Right Side



Left Side



Back



Inside Mouth

