

FACTS ABOUT STRANGULATION

- Strangulation is one of the most lethal forms of violence.
- It only takes 7 seconds to lose consciousness.
- Death will occur within 1 to 2½ minutes.
- You can die within 36 hours after being strangled due to internal injuries.
- Strangulation occurs when blood vessels and air passages are closed by external pressure on the neck.
- Strangulation stops oxygen to the brain and blocks the airway.
- Strangulation is not choking — choking is having a piece of food lodged in your throat.
- Strangulation is caused by manual force (like one hand around your neck, two hands around your neck, a forearm pressed on your neck or wrapped around your neck, kneeling on your neck).
- Strangulation is also caused by a ligature (like a rope, phone cord, electrical cord, shoelace) or hanging.
- Remember ... **Seconds to unconsciousness, minutes to death.**

YOU WERE STRANGLED. NOW WHAT?

- Seek medical care immediately! You could die within 36 hours if your injuries are not treated.
- Make a report to law enforcement (city police, sheriff's deputy, or campus police).
- Be aware of what you were feeling and thinking during the attack and share those thoughts and feelings with the professionals who are assisting you.
- Keep a log of signs and symptoms you experience, especially in the weeks following the attack.
- It cannot be stressed enough: **GET MEDICAL ATTENTION** as soon as possible. Go to the emergency room, a walk-in medical clinic, or your private doctor, but just do it. Your life depends upon it.

CONTACTS / RESOURCES

Emergency 911	Police Department 552-6300
YWCA crisis line 542-1944	Sheriff's Office 258-4810
Crime Victim Advocate Program 258-3830	UM Police 243-4000
UM SARC 243-6559 Student Advocacy Resource Center	First Step 329-5776 Sexual assault resource center

You were not
choked.

You were
strangled.

And you
could die.

Signs, Symptoms, and
Facts about Strangulation

SIGNS OF STRANGULATION

- **Face** – Red or flushed, tiny pinpoint red spots (petechiae), scratch marks
- **Eyes and Eyelids** – Bloodshot eyes, tiny pinpoint red spots
- **Nose** – Bloody nose, broken nose, petechiae
- **Finger tips** – Numbness or tingling
- **Ear** – Petechiae around and behind the ear, bleeding from the ear canal
- **Mouth** – Bruising, swollen tongue, swollen lips, cuts/abrasions
- **Under the chin** – Redness, scratch marks, bruises, abrasions
- **Chest** – Redness, scratch marks, bruises, abrasions
- **Neck** – Redness, scratch marks, finger nail impressions, swelling, ligature mark(s), single finger or thumb-size bruise, other bruises
- **Head** – Petechiae on the scalp
- **Urinary/Bowels** – Incontinence, wetting oneself, defecating

There may be no external signs of strangulation, but internal damage to your throat tissue can result in a stroke, resulting in death within days or even years after the strangulation occurred.

SYMPTOMS OF STRANGULATION

- **HEENT*** – Changes in vision, blurriness, ringing in ears, sore throat, coughing, hard to swallow, voice change (hoarseness, change in sound of voice, difficulty speaking)
- **Respiratory** – Hard to breathe, chest pain, uncomfortable to lie down flat
- **Gastrointestinal** – Heartburn, acid reflux, vomiting, nausea
- **Neurological** – Dizziness, weakness, loss of consciousness, headache
- **Psychiatric** – Memory loss, depression, suicidal, insomnia/can't sleep, nightmares, anxious
- **Behavior** – “Wild” or combative, restless, manic, agitated, highly emotional, confused

* HEENT = Head, eyes, ears, nose, throat

VISIBLE SIGNS

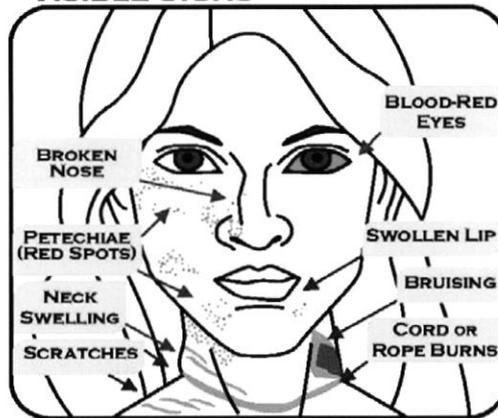


Illustration by Yesenia Aceves, courtesy of the Alliance for HOPE
www.strangulationtraininginstitute.com

LOG YOUR SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Take photos and record your voice (cell phone works fine). Do this right after your attack and during the next few days. Signs and symptoms may not show up immediately. Documentation over time is important.

Other notes (Location, precipitating event, others present)							
Signs and/or Symptoms							
Date and Time							