# MONITOR YOUR SIGNS AND/OR SYMPTOMS

Date and Time:	Journal Your Signs	Journal Your Symptoms	Journal Any Other Sensation

# SIGNS OF STRANGULATION

# SYMPTOMS OF STRANGULATION

- Face- red or flushed, pinpoint red spots (petichiae), scratch marks
- Eyes and eyelidspetichiae to the left or right eyeball, blood shot eyes
- Nose bloody nose, broken nose, petichiae
- Finger tips- bruises are circular and oval and often faint
- Ear- petichiae (external and/or ear canal), bleeding from ear canal
- Mouth- bruising, swollen tongue, swollen lips, cuts/ abrasions
- Under the chin- redness, scratch marks, bruise(s), abrasions
- Chest- redness, scratch marks, bruise(s), abrasions
- Shoulders- redness, scratch marks, bruise(s), abrasions
- Neck- redness, scratch marks, finger nail impressions, bruise(s), swelling, ligature mark
- **Head-** petichiae (on the scalp)
- Other- hair pulled, bump(s), skull fracture, concussion

#### Voice changes

- Raspy voice
- Hoarse voice
- Coughing
- Unable to speak
- Complete loss of voice

## Swallowing changes

- Trouble swallowing
- Painful to swallow
- Neck pain
- Nausea/ Vomiting
- Drooling

## • Breathing Changes

- Difficulty breathing
- Hyperventilation
- Unable to breath

### Behavioral changes

- Restlessness or combativeness
- Problems concentrating, amnesia
- Agitation
- Post-traumatic Stress Syndrome
- Hallucinations
- Memory Loss
- Unconsciousness
- Dizziness/ headaches
- Involuntary urination or defecation

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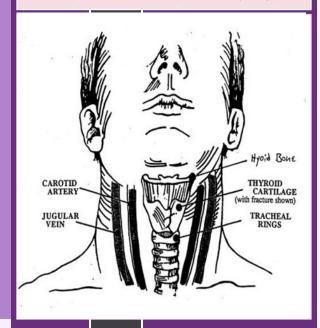
FACTS VICTIMS OF
CHOKING
(STRANGULATION)
NEED TO KNOW!

## **STRANGULATION**

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.

## IMPORTANT PARTS OF THE NECK



## STRANGULATION (CONT.)

## **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.

Very little pressure on both the carotid arteries and/or veins for ten seconds is necessary to cause unconsciousness. However, if the pressure is immediately released, consciousness will be regained within ten seconds. To completely close off the trachea (windpipe), three times as much pressure (33 lbs.) is required. Brain death will occur in 4 to 5 minutes, if strangulation persists.

## **Observing Changes**

Observation of the changes in these signs over time can greatly facilitate determination of the nature and scope of internal damage produced during the assault, and lend credibility to witness accounts of the force and duration of the assault.

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, light headedness, headache, involuntary urination and/or defecation.

Although most victims may *suffer no visible inju- ries* whatsoever and many fully recover from being strangled, *all victims, especially pregnant victims, should be encouraged to seek immediate medical attention.* A medical evaluation may be crucial in detecting internal injuries and saving a life.

# USE THE FACE AND NECK DIAGRAM TO MARK VISIBLE INJURIES:





