

FACTS ABOUT STRANGULATION

It is acknowledged that the occurrence of strangulation is under reported. However, strangulation has been recognized as one of the more serious and lethal forms of domestic violence (DV). Statistics show that:

- Strangulation can result in loss of consciousness within about 10 seconds and death within 4-5 minutes
- Women are strangled six times more often than men
- In the United States, 10% of all non-accidental deaths are attributed to strangulation
- Close to 40% of DV victims reported strangulation as part of DV; however, only 10% of victims actually report this to law enforcement at the time of the incident
- Strangulation often leaves no marks or any other external evidence on the skin



STRANGULATION IS NEVER OKAY

STRANGULATION CAN KILL
Report it to local law enforcement and get medical assistance immediately

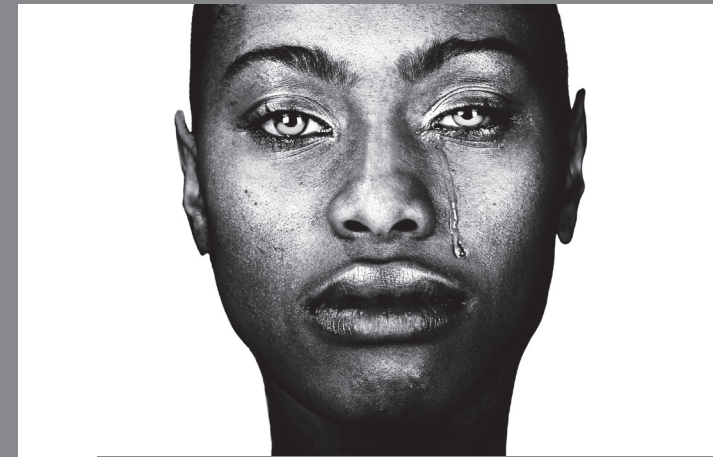
For more information, contact:
Office of the Attorney General
Bureau of Victim Assistance
P.O. Box 220 Jackson, MS 39205
601.359.6766 | 800.829.6766
attorneygenerallynnfitch.com



Lynn Fitch
ATTORNEY GENERAL

STRANGULATION

THE SILENT KILLER



Strangulation is a crime

Know what to look for
and how to help



Lynn Fitch
ATTORNEY GENERAL



WHAT IS STRANGULATION

DANGEROUS EFFECTS OF STRANGULATION

RECOGNIZING STRANGULATION

Under Mississippi law, to “strangle” means to restrict the flow of oxygen or blood by intentionally applying pressure on the neck or throat or chest of another person by any means or to intentionally block the nose or mouth of another person by any means.

A person who strangles, or attempts to strangle, a current or former spouse of the defendant or a child of that person, a person living as a spouse or who formerly lived as a spouse with the defendant or a child of that person, a parent, grandparent, child, grandchild or someone similarly situated to the defendant, a person who has a current or former dating relationship with the defendant, or a person with whom the defendant has had a biological or legally adopted child is guilty of the felony of aggravated domestic abuse. (Miss. Code Ann. § 97-3-7(4))



Strangulation is a tactic often used by abusers in domestic relationships and is a **SILENT KILLER**. Common forms of strangulation associated with domestic violence include:

- Manual strangulation, in which the perpetrator uses a part of his or her body to apply pressure to the victim’s neck
- Ligature strangulation, in which an object such as a cord or rope is used to block air flow

Both methods are extremely dangerous and can lead to permanent health problems or death. When force is applied to the throat or neck, the airway, carotid arteries and jugular veins are blocked off, leaving the victim at risk of death or brain damage.

Even when strangulation lasts for only a few seconds, the health repercussions can be devastating. A victim is unable to breathe, may see “stars,” and eventually loses consciousness as blood and oxygen supplies to the brain are impeded. The cartilage and bones in the throat can break or collapse instantly under the pressure. The victim is at a high risk of dying within hours or days if these structures are damaged.

Dangerous effects of strangulation include:

- *Brain Damage*
- *Severe pain in the neck and shoulder area*
- *Seizures, psychosis and amnesia*
- *Hoarseness, voice changes or the inability to speak*
- *Sore throat and/or difficulty swallowing*
- *Miscarriage*
- *Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath*
- *Involuntary urination or defecation*
- *Restlessness, agitation or aggression*
- *Dizziness, headache, vomiting*
- *Loss of consciousness*
- *Death*

Strangulation does not always result in visible injuries.

A person who has been strangled may indicate that they have been “choked.” While strangulation and choking are often used interchangeably, they are completely different things. Choking refers to the accidental blockage of the windpipe caused by an object, such as food. Strangulation is the restriction of the flow of blood or oxygen through an intentional act.

Injuries and/or bruising may not be visible for days, if at all. It is not uncommon for strangulation injuries to be internal and detectable only through a medical examination. The absence of external injuries does not reduce the lethality. However, you may notice:

- *Abrasions, scratches and/or redness on the face and neck*
- *Reddening in the whites of the eyes*
- *Difficulty breathing and/or hoarseness*
- *Broken capillaries around the eyes, neck or face*



If you notice visible signs or recognize any of the symptoms in someone you believe has been strangled, encourage them to seek medical attention immediately. Remember, a victim of strangulation may not be thinking clearly and may require help in seeking treatment. Be their voice during this time of crisis. Immediate medical attention can save a life.