

## **Strangulation/Suffocation**

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**Strangulation or Suffocation can cause a medical emergency which can result in death days after an incident**

**Best Practice: Call for immediate medical evaluation**

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### **Strangulation/Suffocation Physical Signs/Symptoms**

**Hoarse and/or sore throat**

**Raspy voice**

**Difficulty talking, breathing, or swallowing**

**Shortness of breath**

**Loss of bodily functions (bowel movement or urine)**

**ringing ears or light-headedness**

**Dizzy or seeing spots**

**Fainting or loss of consciousness**

**Swelling of the neck**

**Impression/ligature marks**

**Bruising**

**Mental status changes**

**Spots around eyes, face, mouth or scalp  
from ruptured capillaries or petechiae**

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### **Examples of Medical Questions:**

**Are you having or did you have difficulty breathing? Describe.**

**Are you or did you feel light-headed, faint, or close to losing consciousness?**

**Have you experienced any loss of bodily functions (urination or bowel movement) or nausea, vomiting?**

**Are you in pain or discomfort?**

**Are you having trouble swallowing?**

### **Examples of Investigation Questions:**

**The mechanics of the assault (i.e. one hand, choke hold, hand over mouth) (amount of force) (ligature) (amount of pressure)**

**Was he/she saying anything?**

**How did the strangulation or suffocation stop?**

**Were you able to try to resist? (scratching, biting, hitting...)**

**Many victims will have NO visible injury**