

## ADVICE FOR VICTIMS / SURVIVORS

Most people get better after a strangulation injury, but sometimes problems may occur. Strangulation injuries could be considered like a concussion or being knocked out. Serious problems are rare but may occur sometimes days later. It is best to get checked out.

### Serious problems

Return to your doctor or hospital (dial 111) if you notice any of the following:

- Sleepy or difficult to wake
- Confused
- Fits or falling down, problems with balance
- Breathing problems
- Tongue swelling
- Vomiting
- Problems with vision, speaking or understanding speech

### Milder problems

- Mild headache
- Feeling dizzy, can't remember, can't concentrate for long
- Feeling tired, annoyed or poor sleep
- Small bruises (pinpoint) on face, neck or body
- Small burst blood vessels in the eyes

These milder problems usually get better without treatment. But if you develop new bruises or swelling or are worried, see your family doctor (GP) for a check.

## ADVICE FOR ADVOCATES

### Safety questions

Advocates may help survivors understand the seriousness of strangulation. They can discuss the increased risks of serious harm or death. Advocates might also ask clients about strangulation when assessing safety. They might ask 'has your partner ever put their hands around your throat', or 'has your partner put pressure on your neck so you couldn't breathe' or 'has your partner ever covered your mouth or nose with their hand or anything else so you couldn't breathe?'

### Document information

With client consent, advocates should document any discussions with their client, including considering photographs or voice recordings.

### Encourage client to seek help

If your client has been strangled within the previous 48 hours, or exhibits signs and symptoms after strangulation, advocates must strongly encourage them to seek medical attention.

Need more information or training,  
contact [www.robveale.com](http://www.robveale.com)

# Strangulation & Intimate Partner Violence



*Rob Veale Ltd*  
[www.robveale.com](http://www.robveale.com)

Information from the Strangulation Training Institute and other sources has been used in compiling this brochure. Check out their website on [StrangulationTrainingInstitute.com](http://StrangulationTrainingInstitute.com)

## STRANGULATION IS NOT CHOKING

STRANGULATION	CHOKING
Pressure (compression) applied externally to the neck	Airway blocked (obstructed) from the inside of the neck
Pressure restricts blood and air getting to and from the brain	Food or other foreign objects partly or entirely blocks the windpipe (trachea)
Usually intentionally done by someone else	Usually accidental (generally while eating)
Potential serious physical injury or death, even after the external pressure ends	Minimal potential for long-term physical injury after the blockage is removed

## STRANGULATION STATISTICS



**1 in 3**

women in NZ will experience physical or sexual violence during their lifetime



**68%** of women at high risk will experience near-fatal strangulation by their partner



50% don't leave any marks, 85% can't be photographed



38% lose consciousness



35% are strangled during sexual assault  
9% are pregnant



70% of victims believe they are going to die



Victims lose consciousness in 6 to 14 seconds. Death can occur in 4 to 5 minutes

Chances of homicide increase **7X** for victims who have been strangled, compared to victims who have never been strangled

## CONSEQUENCES OF STRANGULATION

Strangulation may result in:-

- Physical injury
  - Death within 4 to 5 minutes
  - Unconsciousness within 6 to 14 seconds
  - Arterial damage and neck swelling
  - Petechiae – small burst blood vessels
  - Dizziness, sore throat, voice changes
- Neurological injury
  - Facial or eyelid drooping
  - Stroke-like symptoms including blindness
  - Memory loss
  - Paralysis
- Psychological injury
  - PTSD, depression, anxiety
  - Suicidal ideation
  - Nightmares and sleep disturbances
  - Amnesia and memory loss
- Delayed fatality – Death can occur hours, days or weeks after the attack due to various causes

## STRANGULATION IS A CRIME

Section 189A of the Crimes Act now describes strangulation as serious criminal offending and a very serious assault. A person could be sentenced up to 7 years in prison for non-fatal strangulation.