



Rob Veale Ltd

Family Violence Workshop Series (2020)

This series of slides covers material presented in the wider 'Strangulation in the context of Intimate Partner Violence' presentation. Topics include:

- Strangulation or Choking
- Using the correct terms
- Questions to ask



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Know the difference between "Choking" vs. "Strangulation"




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Use the correct term but always quote the victim

- **Choke** (verb) means to:
 - keep from breathing in a normal way by compressing or obstructing the windpipe; adulterating available air; or to block entirely the windpipe (hard candy or food)
- **Strangle** (verb) means to:
 - To obstruct seriously or fatally the normal breathing of a person
- **Attempted strangulation**

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Investigators: Check for ...

Injuries behind the ears, the inner lips, inner cheeks, on the face, eyelids, neck, scalp, chin, jaw line, shoulders, chest, arms and hands

Redness, bruising, abrasions, scratch marks, finger/thumb pad marks, ligature marks, tiny red spots, swelling, and/or lumps on neck or face

If the victim is wearing makeup, ask her to remove it before you leave the scene; you may be able to identify additional injuries.

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Asking about strangulation

- Mechanism, possibly more than one
- What did they see, hear, feel, think?
- Did they lose consciousness?
- What was happening at the time
 - Strangulation in the context of sexual behaviour might not be considered as 'violence' and will go unreported
- **Seek medical advice if strangulation within 48 hours**

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Asking about strangulation

- Mechanism, possibly more than one
- What did they see, hear, feel
- Did they lose consciousness
- What was the time of day
- Context of sexual behaviour
- Considered as 'violence' and will go reported
- Seek medical advice if strangulation within 48 hours

ASK A BEHAVIOURALLY BASED QUESTION - 'HAS SOMEONE EVER PUT THEIR HANDS OR ANYTHING AROUND YOUR THROAT, SO YOU COULDN'T BREATHE, SO YOU WERE FRIGHTENED'

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How did you feel?

- "fuzzy," "dizzy"
- "head rush"
- "I saw stars."
- "I saw black and white."
- "I couldn't breathe"
- "I passed out"
- "I vomited several times"
- "I had trouble swallowing"
- "I felt like my head was going to explode"
- "I felt a rush of blood to my head"



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More Questions to ask

- What did the suspect say when he was strangling the victim (use quotes)?
- What did the victim say to the suspect (use quotes)?
- What did the victim think was going to happen when strangled (was going to die, never see my children again ...)
- What caused the suspect to stop (victim passed out, witness intervention, child started screaming)? Would he have kept going if he wasn't interrupted?

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More Questions to ask

- Did the victim attempt to defend herself? Bite marks on the suspect's chest...
- Was the incident witnessed by children?
- Any pre-existing injuries to the victim or suspect?
- Any prior incidents of strangulation? To the victim or previous partners?
- History of domestic violence?
- Did suspect force victim to engage in sexual conduct?

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