

## What to Do if You Are Being Strangled

### ■ GET OUT!

- Call the police.
- Go to the hospital and have a full medical examination.
- Tell a trusted friend or family member.
- Make a safety plan for yourself.\*
- Get a protective order against the perpetrator.\*

*\*See our brochures on these topics for more information*

## How to Help a Friend Who is Being Strangled

- Listen and believe what they are saying.
- Assure them that they do not deserve abuse.
- Encourage them to get help immediately!
- Let them know you support them.
- Gather information for them.
- Take them to clinics and shelters, and offer to help out in any way possible.



## WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

### Police

In an emergency, dial 911

Metropolitan Police Department:

1st District: **(202) 299-2037**  
1DSubstation: **(202) 698-0068**

2nd District: **(202) 715-7300**

3rd District: **(202) 673-6815**  
3DSubstation: **(202) 576-8222**

4th District: **(202) 715-1506**

5th District: **(202) 698-0150**

6th District: **(202) 698-0880**  
6DSubstation: **(202) 698-2088**

7th District: **(202) 698-1500**



### National

National Domestic Violence Hotline  
**(800) 799-SAFE (7233)**

### Local

Domestic Violence Intake Center

NW: **(202) 879-0152** SE: **(202) 561-3000**

24-hour shelters, Hotlines and Counseling:

House of Ruth: **(202) 667-7001** x 217

My Sister's Place: **(202) 529-5991**

Financial Assistance

Crime Victims Compensation Program:  
**(202) 879-4216**

Legal Assistance

American University: **(202) 274-4140**

AYUDA: **(202) 387-0434**

Bread for the City: **(202) 265-2400**

SAFE: **(202) 879-7857**



### Domestic Violence Unit

300 Indiana Ave, N.W., Room 3156  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
Office: 202-727-7137 | Fax: 202-727-6491  
<http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/victimassistance>

## Strangulation

What happens when abusers strangle their victim?



A guide to getting educated and getting help.



## Choking VS. Strangulation

**Choking** is an **accidental** obstruction of the air passage by some foreign object such as food.

**Strangulation** is a **purposeful** asphyxiation characterized by a closure of the blood vessels and or air/passages of the neck as a result of external pressure on the neck.

### Statistics

- Ten percent of violent deaths are from strangulation.
- Women are strangled six times more often than men.
- A woman can strangle a man twice her size.
- The majority of strangulation cases occur in domestic situations.
- Almost 50% of the time, children are present in strangulation cases.
- After just 50 seconds without oxygen to the brain, most people do not recover.
- After four minutes without oxygen, a person can be declared legally brain dead.

## THREE TYPES OF STRANGULATION

- Hanging
- Ligature (with a chord or rope)
- Manual (with hands or forearm)

### Possible Effects

- Hoarseness or total loss of voice
- Difficult or painful swallowing
- Difficulty or inability to breathe
- Restlessness and violence early on; psychosis and amnesia (changes in personality) in the long term
- Involuntary urination or defecation
- Miscarriage days or hours later
- Subconjunctival hemorrhage (Blood-red eyes)
- Bruises, cuts, scrapes, petechiae (small red dots), and finger imprints
- Death

## Physical Abuse

### Ranking Scale Increasing in Severity

1. Throwing things, punching walls
2. Pushing, shoving, grabbing, throwing things at the victim
3. Slapping with a open hand
4. Kicking, biting
5. Hitting with closed fists
6. Attempted strangulation
7. Beating up (pinned to wall, hit and kicked many times)
8. Threatening with a weapon
9. Assault with a weapon

**STRANGULATION  
IS A  
SERIOUS ISSUE!**

