

Information for patients and carers

Strangulation



What do we mean by strangulation?

Strangulation is where there is pressure on the neck. Sometimes this is described as choking or being grabbed by the neck – this could be by a hand or hands on the neck, being put in a headlock or by something wrapped tight around the neck, like a scarf, belt or rope.

Pressure to the neck can lead to less oxygen getting to the brain and there is a risk to life every time it is done.

There is no safe way to be strangled and whether you have been strangled once or one hundred times, whether it was today or many years ago, it is never too late to speak to someone. You will never be wasting anyone's time.

In England and Wales strangulation is a criminal offence.

You are not to blame

Some people who have been strangled feel embarrassed or feel that they are to blame. This is never the case.

Signs & Symptoms

Pain in your neck

Difficulty or pain with breathing and swallowing

Eye problems – seeing stars, blurred or loss of vision (sight)

Hearing problems – loss of hearing, or a ringing, popping or roaring noise

Unconsciousness

Loss of control of your bladder or bowel so that you wet or soil yourself

Confusion, feeling agitated

Voice changes, such as a husky or deep voice

Headache, feeling sick or being sick.

Only 50% of people who are strangled will have any injury to the neck or head that can be seen. Lack of injury does not mean that the attack was less serious or less dangerous or that it will be easy to 'get over' psychologically.

When to seek help?

Strangulation is dangerous and can lead to death very quickly. If you have been a victim of strangulation, you should get medical help as soon as possible even if you are not sure about reporting to the police.

In an emergency call 999.

If you feel that you are safe and it is not an emergency, call: Police **101** / NHS **111** or your GP.

The freephone, 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline:
0808 2000 247.

Make a record

Whether you have reported the strangulation to the police or seen a doctor about it or not, it will still be useful for you to keep a record of any symptoms or injuries that you notice.

General advice

Being a victim of strangulation is a very stressful experience. It is normal to have physical and emotional symptoms afterwards. You may have been to the hospital or had contact with the police/other professionals, this can be physically and mentally draining. You should seek support from others like your GP and give yourself time to recover, resting physically and emotionally and listening to what your body is tell you.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:
adult.safeguarding@lthtr.nhs.uk

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk
www.nhs.uk
www.accessable.co.uk
www.patient.co.uk
www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware
www.ifas.org.uk/resources/

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www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

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This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.

Our patient information group review our new leaflets regularly, if you feel you would like to feedback on this information or join our reading group please contact on email address:

patientexperienceandinvolem@LTHTR.nhs.uk

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