

Domestic Abuse Strangulation

What is strangulation?

One of the most lethal forms of domestic abuse violence, strangulation occurs when the body is deprived of oxygen through external pressure applied to the neck with sufficient force to cause the closure of blood vessels and/or air passages. It can lead to unconsciousness within seconds and death within minutes. Its long-term effects can include brain damage, miscarriages or heart attacks that can strike days or weeks after the assault.

R.S. 14:35.3

Louisiana's Domestic Abuse Battery statute, R.S. 14:35.3, defines strangulation as "intentionally impeding the normal breathing or circulation of the blood by applying pressure on the throat or neck or by blocking the nose of the victim."

The statute includes a provision that enhances the punishment when the domestic abuse battery involves strangulation.

Call 911

Strangulation is one of the best predictors of domestic violence homicide, according to the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Victims of prior attempted strangulation are seven times more likely to become a homicide victim.

If you or someone you know has been strangled or has been a victim of domestic abuse, contact police immediately.

Signs and Symptoms

Numerous physical signs point to strangulation, including self-inflicted neck injuries the victim causes to themselves as they claw at their assailant. Other signs include:

- Pinpoint red spots, called petechiae, on the scalp, face, nose, the eyeball or the ears;
- Skull fracture or pulled hair;
- Bloody or broken nose;
- Bruising on the mouth, swollen lips or tongue and cuts or abrasions, and/or;
- Scratch marks on the neck and chin, ligature marks on the neck;

Symptoms can include:

- Change in voice;
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing;
- Blurred or lost vision;
- Hearing loss and/or;
- Memory Loss, unconsciousness.



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