

Has your partner or someone close to you ever...

*Tried to strangle or 'choke' you?
(put their hands around your neck,
or something else like a rope)*

*Tried to stop you from breathing or suffocate
you by putting pressure on/around your
neck/chest, or covering your face?*

If this has happened to you – whether only once or many times – you could be in danger of being injured or killed. These actions stop blood and oxygen from flowing to the person's brain, and can cause brain damage.

If you are in immediate danger, ring Police on 111.

Otherwise, you can ring Shine's Helpline 0508 744 633, or another family violence service, to talk about your situation, and get support, information, and referrals to other services that might be helpful.

Seek medical advice from a doctor as soon as possible and let them know you have been strangled, even if it has been a few days or more.

People only have visible injuries about half of the time, but even if they don't, they might have internal harm, such as a brain injury.

If you've been strangled or suffocated by a partner or ex-partner, you are in greater danger of being seriously injured or killed by them in the future.



Shine's Helpline (24/7) can help you if you're experiencing family violence, with emotional support, information, help with planning for safety and wellbeing, and referrals for other services. We can just listen if that's what you need.

You can also call us if you're a friend, family member, support person or professional of someone who is experiencing family violence, or if you are worried about your own harmful behaviour to someone close to you.



For more information about Shine and family violence, visit our website:

www.2shine.org.nz

Free Helpline:

0508 744 633

We're here to help you.
7 days a week 24 hours a day.

 www.facebook.com/shinenz
 enquiries@2shine.org.nz

Provided by Presbyterian Support Northern
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Family Violence and Non-Fatal (not causing death) Strangulation or Suffocation

Information for people
experiencing family violence
and their support people

Strangulation and suffocation are very dangerous

These are common and very dangerous actions used to control someone else by making them feel afraid or intimidated.

Abusive partners often minimise these actions and say things like 'But I never hit you.' But this behaviour is often more dangerous than hitting, punching or kicking. Non-fatal strangulation and suffocation is a criminal offence, punishable by up to 7 years' imprisonment.

Strangulation/Suffocation Timeline

A small amount of pressure around the neck can cause loss of consciousness within seconds, and death within minutes.

External pressure to neck or chest
Difficulty breathing, pain



Decrease of oxygen to brain
Dizziness, weakness of limbs, 'popping' eyes, blurred vision



Blacking out, fainting, loss of consciousness
7-15 seconds



Loss of bladder / bowel control
15-30 seconds



Death
1-2.5 minutes

If you notice any of these problems after being strangled or suffocated, call 111 for an ambulance:

- Sleepy or hard to wake up
- Problems with breathing
- Swelling of your tongue/throat
- Confused (feeling muddled)
- Seizure (falling down & shaking)
- Bad headache or neck pain
- Red spots (burst blood vessels) in or around your eyes
- Vomiting (throwing up)
- Feeling weak or numb
- Problems with seeing, speaking, or understanding someone talking
- Vaginal bleeding or less baby movements (if pregnant)

If you have these problems, they should get better within a few days. If they last longer, see a doctor:

- Mild headache
- Feeling tired or easily annoyed
- Difficulty sleeping
- Bruises to face, neck or chest
- Croaky or hoarse voice

Tell your doctor you've been strangled, so they know what to look for, and ask them to document your injuries in case you need evidence in the future.

Many people feel scared and think they might die while being strangled. Afterwards, they may experience:

- Trouble sleeping, anxiety, distress, sadness, depression
- 'Flashbacks' or sudden memories of the event
- Thoughts about self-harm or suicide
- Being more scared of the person who strangled you

Some things that may help if you're able to do them:

- Take Panadol for a mild headache or mild pain.
- Keep taking any normal medication
- Don't take sleeping pills for 3 days, and avoid alcohol or using any other drugs until you are feeling better
- Avoid driving for at least 24 hours
- Rest and take care of yourself
- Take time off work or school if you need to. Employees are entitled to ten days per year of paid family violence leave
- Don't play any sport where you could injure your head/neck for at least 3 weeks
- Talk to someone you trust about what is happening
- Ring Shine's Helpline (24/7) for support and information

Strangulation during sex may be something you've agreed to, or your partner does to you, making you feel uncomfortable or afraid. If you say yes, you have the right to change your mind at any time, but when your brain gets less oxygen, you may stop thinking clearly, or be unable to speak or move to let them know you want it to stop.

There is no safe way to strangle someone.