

Symptoms

- **Loss of Consciousness**
- **Visual Changes (spots, darkness)**
- **Involuntary urination or defecation**
- **Mental status changes**
 - Restlessness or combativeness
 - Psychosis, amnesia
- **Voice changes or complete loss**
- **Coughing / vomiting**
- **Difficulty swallowing**
- **Difficulty breathing**
- **Pain or tenderness on touch or movement**

Signs

- **Redness of the neck**- may be fleeting
- **Scratch marks**-victim or suspects
- **Bruises** - may not immediately appear
- **Finger tip bruises** are circular and oval and often faint.
- **Tiny red spots** (petechiae) -ruptured capillaries. Found anywhere above the area of constriction. (Jugular restriction)
- **Blood red eyes** are due to capillary rupture in the white portion of the eyes. May suggest a vigorous struggle or intermittent pressure.
- **Swelling of the neck** may be caused by any one or combination of the following: internal bleeding, or an injury of any of the underlying neck structures.

Stages of Strangulation	
Disbelief	Victim cannot believe they are being strangled. Very short in duration.
Primal	Victim fights with whatever means to stop the strangling. <i>Ask the victim what they did to get away or stop the attack. This may explain injuries.</i>
Resignation	Victim gives up, feeling they can do nothing and go limp. <i>Ask the victim what they were thinking about. What did they think was going to happen?</i>

Indicators of Loss of Consciousness

- Loss of memory
- Standing, then waking up on the floor
- Unexplained bump on the head
- Bowel or bladder incontinence
- A witness to the LOC.

Victims who decline Medical Care

- Discuss the warning signs
- Encourage victim to seek medical attention
- Do they have someone at home to monitor them?
- Next 24-48 hours could be critical
- Advise victim to log symptoms

Interviewing Trauma Victims

Trauma physically changes the brain and memory. The Hippocampus, where memory is stored is very sensitive to a lack of oxygen. Trauma causes:

- Triggers chemicals
- Chemicals influence perception, reaction and memory
- Memory becomes fragmented and is stored differently

Ask the victim what they can remember

They will remember more days later

Let them tell their story without interruption

Follow-up Questions

- Tell me how you feel now
- Have any new injuries appeared?
- Do you feel pain anywhere-Describe
- Does your voice sound the same?
- Is there any different feel when you eat? Describe
- Does it feel any different when you swallow? Describe
- What is different now than before the assault? Describe
- Have you heard from the suspect?
- Tell me what you remember about the assault. (Going for more details)
- How can I contact you if you change your phone or address?
- Have they ever put pressure to your neck in the past?
- Is there anything you want to talk about that we have not discussed?