

## Where can I find help?



### In an emergency call:

Ambulance 000

Police 000

Police (non-urgent assistance) 131 444

### Advice, information or help call:

Women's Health Service 8444 0700

Domestic Violence Services  
1800 RESPECT 1800 737 732

Yarrow Place (Rape and Sexual  
Assault Service) 1800 817 421

Nunkuwarrin Yunti  
(Aboriginal Health) 8406 1600

Mensline Australia 1300 789 978

Lifeline 13 11 14

TIS (Telephone Interpreting Service) 13 14 50

Mental Health Triage 13 14 65

### If your child/young adult needs support or help call:

Metropolitan Youth Health 8255 3477

Child & Adolescent Mental  
Health Service 1300 222 647

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

### Health Service

You can get help by speaking to a health professional about what happened. They can check your injuries and can help you to stay safe.

### Police

You can get help by speaking with the police about what happened. Strangulation without consent is an assault and is against the law. Police can make a report and can help you to stay safe.

### Culturally appropriate

Many of these services are available for both men and women from all cultural backgrounds.

### PRIVACY

Your safety is important to us.  
The information you tell us **will not be shared with the person that assaulted you or anyone they are connected with (like their family or friends)**

Please don't feel ashamed and never blame yourself. Abuse is never your fault. You have the right to be safe.  
We care about your safety.



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Government of South Australia

Women's and Children's  
Health Network

## Have you been strangled?

If you have experienced violence or abuse from someone, you may have been strangled or be at risk of strangulation.

- Being strangled can be very frightening.
- Strangulation without consent is a crime in South Australia.

This pamphlet provides information to help you understand the risk of strangulation and what help is available.

## What is strangulation?

- Strangulation is when pressure is pushed against your neck which may stop you from breathing.
- This may stop or reduce oxygen and blood flowing to and from your brain.
- Sometimes people call this “choking”.
- Strangulation can happen in different ways - by putting a hand or hands around your neck, or using something like a rope around your neck. It can also happen if something is pushed against your neck or over your mouth and nose.

## Is strangulation dangerous?

Yes. Strangulation is a life-threatening assault. If you have been strangled did you know that:

- It can be more dangerous than other sorts of physical violence like kicking or punching.
- You are in danger of being seriously injured or killed in the future if you have been strangled by your partner or ex-partner.
- Brain injuries can happen when your brain does not get enough oxygen - even for a short period of time.
- These injuries can get worse in the hours, days or even weeks after being strangled.
- The more times you have been strangled - the more dangerous it is.
- If you are pregnant, being strangled could harm your pregnancy.

**Many people who experienced violence or abuse have been strangled. Strangulation is a common way to hurt and control another person. It is also very dangerous and is a warning sign for future harm.**

## What can happen to me if I have been strangled?

Most people will survive being strangled but you may have ongoing health problems. It is important to get medical help as soon as possible if:

- You are pregnant.
- You have problems breathing or swallowing.
- You lost consciousness (passed-out) while you were strangled.
- You have red or blood-shot eyes.
- You have problems speaking or your voice has changed.
- You are coughing or have pain/swelling in your throat or neck.
- You vomit or feel like vomiting.
- You feel dizzy, lightheaded, have ringing in your ears or have a headache.
- You have changes to your thinking (memory loss, feel confused, mixed-up or restless).
- You feel weak, numb or droopy on one side of your body or face.

**Strangulation is very dangerous. To help you check your symptoms, stay with someone you trust for a few days if you can. Seek advice from services listed on the back of this pamphlet and seek medical help if needed.**

## What should I do?

- Talk to someone who can give you advice. The phone numbers are on the back of this pamphlet.
- Go to a doctor or specialist service if you are pregnant.
- Go to a doctor or specialist service if you have any symptoms. Tell them you have been strangled so they know how best to help you.
- Stay with someone you trust if you can.

## What might happen when I see a doctor?

This will depend on the incident, your strangulation injuries and how long ago it happened. You may have special tests or see these specialist doctors:

- CT neck/angiogram - this test checks the blood vessels, your brain and bones of your head and neck.
- MRI - this test looks at the soft tissue (like muscles, nerves and blood vessels) in your neck and brain.
- ENT specialist - this doctor will check your throat and airway.
- Obstetrician - this doctor will check your pregnancy if you are pregnant.

Your GP, Emergency Department doctor, specialist or other health service can document any injuries which may be used if you want support from the police. This can be helpful to support your health and wellbeing.

**You might think you are OK if you have no marks on your neck, but serious injuries may happen under the skin without you realising. It is really important to get medical help straight away.**