

Strangulation for First Responders

Course Description:

This hour long course is designed to provide first responders with information on the medical presentation of victims of strangulation who have survived the assault. It is intended to educate on the definition, presenting signs and symptoms and medical care that can be associated with this patient population.

Course Objectives:

1. Define strangulation and the possible mechanisms of action.
2. List potential signs and symptoms of a strangulation presentation.
3. Recognize injuries related to strangulation.
4. Review potential medical assessments for strangulation victims.
5. Discuss the first responder's role in caring for victims of strangulation.

Course Outline:

- I. Define Strangulation
 - a. Mechanisms
 - b. Structures involved
 - c. Variables
- II. Fatality
 - a. Immediate causes
 - b. Delayed Causes
- III. Signs and Symptoms
 - a. Lack of injury
 - b. Voice changes
 - c. Swallowing changes
 - d. Breathing changes
 - e. Mental status changes
 - f. Bowel and bladder incontinence
 - g. Potential for miscarriage
 - h. Neck swelling
 - i. Lung injury
- IV. Visible injury
 - a. Abrasions
 - b. Bruises
 - c. Ligature injury
 - d. Petechiae
 - e. Subconjunctival hemorrhage

- V. Neurological findings
- VI. Psychiatric symptoms
- VII. Evaluation
 - a. Undervaluation related to emotional state
 - b. Physical assessments
 - c. Monitoring
 - d. Imaging
- VIII. First responders role
 - a. Access to the environment
 - b. Observations
 - i. Surroundings
 - ii. Relationships
 - c. History
 - d. Documentation