



STRANGULATION INVESTIGATIONS

Part 5: Visible Injury

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing Part 5, officers will be able to:

- Identify potential offensive and defensive injuries as a result of strangulation;
- Describe the significance of specific external injuries; and
- Sufficiently photograph and document evidence of injuries on the victim and perpetrator

DISCUSSION GUIDE

If you would like RESPOND Against Violence to facilitate an extended version of this discussion, email info@respondagainstviolence.org to set up a virtual meeting.

1. Is visible injury required to prosecute a strangulation as a felony? How common is it for visible injury to exist in these cases?
2. Discuss the important things to remember when photographing and documenting external injuries on the victim and perpetrator.
 - Where are injuries likely to appear?
 - Why might injuries be difficult to photograph? How should they be documented instead?
3. What is the most common offensive injury you might see in strangulation crimes? Most common defensive injury on the perpetrator? Common self-inflicted defensive injuries on the victim?
4. What is the difference between redness on a victim's neck and scratches on a perpetrator's face? Which injury is more serious? Which injury should get medical attention, and why?
5. How common is it for victims of strangulation to exhibit petechiae? Where should officers look for petechiae? If you see petechiae on the victim, what does this indicate?
6. When the victim and perpetrator have different stories surrounding the assault, how can you determine who is telling the truth? How might you explain those discrepancies in your report?

7. Why does the location of the injuries on the suspect matter? How can different injuries on a suspect corroborate the victim's account of the asphyxiation assault?
8. Discuss your agency's policy on documenting injuries that might develop over time. How can you ensure follow-up photographs are consistently obtained?