

Non-Fatal Strangulation

“Choking”, or strangulation, is an act of violence frequently used to control and overpower a victim, and has recently been recognized as a particularly lethal form of interpersonal violence. This seminar will explore the physiological effects of strangulation, signs and symptoms, and medical evaluation of these patients. Written and photo documentation will be discussed, as well as the importance of collaboration between health care and law enforcement to improve patient safety. An assistant prosecutor will discuss how to improve the investigation and prosecution of strangulation cases for law enforcement professionals.

This seminar is focused on the team approach to addressing strangulation, and will provide valuable knowledge for nurses, physicians, emergency medical services, social workers, advocates, law enforcement and prosecutors.

Presentations can be tailored to the needs of the audience.

Health care audience:

1-hour presentation covers

- The awareness of non-fatal strangulation as a serious form of violence.
- Identification and documentation of injuries

2- 3 hour presentation

- Current research on strangulation
- Physiological effects of strangulation injuries
- Signs and symptoms of strangulation
- Identification and documentation of injuries
- Medical evaluation of patients with strangulation injuries
- Courtroom testimony

Multidisciplinary audience of health care and law enforcement professionals:

5-hour presentation includes

- Current research on strangulation as a lethal form of violence
- Physiological effects of strangulation injuries
- Signs and symptoms of strangulation
- Identification and documentation of injuries
- Medical evaluation of patients with strangulation injuries
- Team approach to investigating and prosecuting strangulation cases
- Case scenarios: The importance of documentation from initial report to the courtroom

Lawyers:

Course has been approved by Supreme Court of Ohio Commission on Continuing Legal Education for **5.00** total CLE hour(s) instruction.

Nurses:

Objectives

- Recognize the lethality of strangulation
- Summarize the physiological effects of strangulation on the neurological, circulatory and respiratory systems
- Identify two subtle signs/symptoms of strangulation
- Describe the medical evaluation and treatment of strangulation patients
- Relate the importance of collaboration between healthcare and law enforcement in these cases
- Discuss skills needed when testifying in court
- Explain how multidisciplinary collaboration improves patient safety
- Recognize the importance of accurate documentation when a patient chart becomes evidence in court

Participants who attend the entire activity and complete an evaluation form will earn **5.25** contact hours

This continuing nursing education activity was approved by the Ohio Nurses Association (OBN-001-91), an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Approval valid through June 9, 2013. Assigned ONA #15,067.

Speakers

Ruth Downing MSN RN CNP SANE-A

Ruth is currently a family nurse practitioner in an Urgent Care setting. She has been a registered nurse for over 30 years, and a forensic nurse since 1999, with experience in critical care and emergency nursing. Ruth has been active in county, state, and national efforts addressing violence in our communities and has appeared as an expert witness in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault and strangulation.

Ruth initiated and directed a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program for seven years. She is an active member of the Ohio Chapter of the International Association of Forensic Nurses, serving as President in 2008. She is also a member of the Family Violence Prevention Center Advisory Council, Ohio Pregnancy Associated Mortality Review Board, Ohio Sexual Assault Task Force, Central Ohio Rescue & Restore Coalition, American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, Ohio Association of Advanced Practice Nurses, and the Delaware County Medical Reserve Corps.

Among her other accomplishments, Ruth has authored "Manual and Ligature Strangulation" for On the Edge, and has presented at the International Association of Forensic Nurses Scientific Assembly, the National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence, and to health care and law enforcement professionals nationally and internationally. She has provided education on sexual assault, domestic violence and strangulation to nurses, physicians, law enforcement, social workers, parents, grand juries, and others.

Marianne Hemmeter JD

Marianne Hemmeter is Assistant Section Chief for the Crime Victim Section at the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Past experience includes Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Delaware County, Ohio where she prosecuted all types of felony offenses, including sexual assault, felony domestic violence cases, felonious assaults, child endangering, murder and aggravated murder. She has provided trainings for both law enforcement and forensic nurses on the importance of their roles in crimes of violence. Marianne Hemmeter received a BA in History from Trinity College in Washington D.C. in 1994, and a JD from Ohio State University College of Law in 1997.

Comments from Recent Trainings

Missoula, Montana

It was a pleasure to meet you and listen to your excellent presentation at the "Strangulation and Domestic Violence" seminar in Missoula a few weeks ago. Your knowledge was impressive but equally as impressive was your ability to convey and teach the subject. I appreciate the fact that you were willing to come such a distance to teach such an important topic that has been overlooked for years. Just wanted you to know that in less than two months having come here to present, you have ignited a spark here in Missoula for locals to share the word about strangulation

Albuquerque, New Mexico

"Thank you, and Marianne, for helping to make our conference a success! I enjoyed working with you immensely! The sessions you provided were outstanding and the evaluations were extremely good." - Ellen Gatewood, New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Albuquerque, New Mexico