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Domestic Violence Investigation Checklist: Strangulation Cases

1. Outward trauma may not be visible. ASK about:
 - a. Sore throat or difficulty swallowing.
 - b. Neck pain – ask about previous neck injury.
 - c. Hoarseness.
 - d. Light headedness.
 - e. Fainting or losing consciousness.
 - f. Nausea or vomiting.
 - g. Incontinence.
 - h. Ringing ears.
2. LOOK for outward signs of injury, including:
 - a. A discolored tongue.
 - b. Bruising behind the ears.
 - c. Signs of neck injuries such as finger impressions, scratches, bruising, impression marks, etc.
 - d. Petechial hemorrhaging.
 - e. Neck swelling – ask about previous neck injuries.
 - f. LISTEN for coughing.
3. Take pictures of the defendant's hands if injured or finger impressions are visible on the victim.
4. Collect the object(s) used to strangle the victim.
5. In your report writing, use the word "strangulation", not choke.
6. Use the phrase, "consistent with strangulation".
7. Ask the victim what the defendant said while strangling her. Use quotes.
8. Ask the victim to describe the defendant's demeanor and facial expressions during the attack.
9. Ask the victim what she thought was going to happen.
10. Ask about prior incidents of strangulation.
11. Remember the investigation checklist for non-strangulation cases.

**For more information, contact
(800) 828-9745**