

The Choking Game

What is the choking game?

The “choking game” is not a game. It is a dangerous activity that causes a decrease in oxygen to the brain. Most people who play the game do not understand the risk to their health or life. Even when someone survives, thousands of brain cells have been killed and there is brain damage.

People join in the choking game to get high or to pass out. Teens play the game when they feel pressured by their friends or want to join in a group. Belts, sheets, or t-shirts may be used to cut off one’s air supply. The game may involve breathing quickly and then holding one’s breath. This is called hyperventilating. Pressure is put on the stomach at the same time.

The choking game is often tried by teens age 9 to 18. Males are twice as likely as females to play. One in 14 teens admit to this activity.

What are the dangers?

- **Death. Teens can easily be strangled by cutting off their air supply. This happens more when someone does it alone.**
- Brain damage or seizures.
- Blindness or other permanent vision changes.
- Falls that cause head injuries, broken bones, serious cuts or bruising.

What are the warning signs?

- Blood shot eyes or small red bruises on the face or eyelids
- Unexplained bruising, scrapes, or line-like marks around the neck
- Severe headache
- Seizures or passing out
- Confused, groggy or dazed after being left alone
- Talking about the choking game or similar activities
- Curiosity about choking
- Locked or blocked bedroom or bathroom doors
- History of visiting websites or chat rooms associated with the choking game
- Ropes, scarves, sheets, belts, t-shirts, dog leashes, bungee cords that are tied or looped around bedroom furniture, doorknobs, closet rods, etc

There are many other names for the choking game including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• black hole• blackout• fainting game• flatlining• funky chicken• gasp• natural high• high riser	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• knockout• sleeper• snuff• pass out• airplaning• breath play• California high• tingling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• choke out• lions and tigers• purple dragon• rising sun• rush• space cowboy• space monkey• twitching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• suffocation roulette• speed dreaming• cloud nine• elevator hangman• harvey wallbanger• 7 minutes of heaven• American dream game• the scarf game
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What should I do if I think someone is playing the choking game?

- Talk to the person about your concerns.
- Talk about the dangers.
- Explain that it is **not** a game. It is not a safe activity.
- If it is a friend, also get help from an adult such as a parent, teacher or health care provider.

For more information visit: <http://www.gaspinfo.com/en/home.html>

ALERT: Call your child’s healthcare provider, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.