

The Choking Game

is also referred to as...

- Blackout
- Flatliner
- Airplaning
- Fainting Game
- Space Monkey
- Pass-Out Game
- Dream Game
- Suffocation
- Roulette
- The American Dream
- California Choke
- Purple Dragon
- Cloud Nine

Is the Choking Game new?

No. This game has been played for generations. It was never a safe activity, but it is more dangerous now as people are using ligatures, such as belts and ropes, and are playing the game alone.

What are some statistics on the Choking Game?

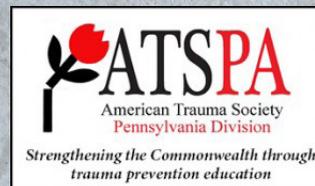
- Boys were 87% more likely to die from the Choking Game than girls.
- Eighty-nine percent of the children that died were between the ages of 11 and 16.
- Nearly all of the children who died played alone.
- Deaths have occurred all over the United States. The Choking Game is not limited to one region.

What is the ATSPA?

The American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division (ATSPA) is a non-profit trauma prevention education organization dedicated to reducing the suffering, disability and death caused by trauma throughout the Commonwealth.

The broken red tulip symbolizes the pain, suffering and lifestyle change caused by traumatic injury. It not only symbolizes the person/people directly devastated by trauma, but also their families, friends and others that care about them.

The goal of the ATSPA is to keep that tulip strong, straight and unaffected by trauma.



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The Choking Game



Brought to you by:
American Trauma Society,
Pennsylvania Division

What is the Choking Game?

It is a dangerous activity that youth sometimes play to get a brief high. Blood flow is cut off from the brain, depriving it of oxygen - all for just a few second of feeling high.

Youth choke in several ways, including using:

- Belts
- Ropes
- Bare hands
- Hyperventilation
- Having others push on their chest.

The Choking Game can be done alone or in a group.

Who is “playing” the game?

The game is predominantly played by youth between the ages of 9 to 16. These adolescents are generally academically high-achieving and very active in sports. They do not want to risk getting caught with drugs or alcohol and may play the Choking Game as an alternative.

Why is the game so dangerous?

- Someone playing the game can become unconscious in a matter of seconds.
- In as little as **three minutes** of continues strangulation (choking), basic functions such as memory, balance and the central nervous system start to fail.
- In **four or five minutes**, death occurs.
- The rush from playing can become addictive.
- Choking is even more dangerous when done alone because **no one is there to release the pressure** if the adolescent passes out with a ligature around his/her neck.

A game that kills?

As many as **1,000** people die each year while “playing” the Choking Game.

Choking Game Prevention Tips

1 INFORM yourself

Learn the facts about the Choking Game and make sure you are aware of its dangers. Remember that statistics for the Choking Game are hard to find. **Many of the deaths are misclassified as suicides.**

2 TALK to your children

Simply ask, “**What to you know about the Choking Game?**” The best weapon against this activity is information. Make sure you explain the dangers because many have no idea how deadly it can be. Explain that the risk is not only death, but also seizures and permanent brain damage.

3 WATCH for warning signs

Even after you have talked to your children, **continue to watch for any signs** that they might be involved in the Choking Game.

Warning Signs

Think your child might be playing the Choking Game? Look for these signs:

- Demands for privacy
- Frequent and severe headaches
- Flushed face and red or bloodshot eyes
- Disorientation after being alone
- Loss of concentration
- Increased and uncharacteristic irritability
- Suspicious mark(s) on neck, sometimes hidden by clothing
- Questions about the effects, sensations or dangers of asphyxiation (applying pressure to restrict oxygen and/or blood flow to the brain).



Also look for these warning signs in your home:

- A strap, belt, rope, leash, Ace bandage or other object that could be used to choke lying near the child for no apparent reason.
- Wear marks on the bed posts, closet rods, doorknobs, etc.
- Locked bedroom doors.