

Ligature removal

(On finding a patient suspended by a ligature around their neck)

- **Pull the emergency alarm (or shout for help if in an area with no alarm):**
 - If on your own with no nearby help, leave the patient and phone 2222 and ask for the cardiac arrest team.
 - Otherwise, have a responder phone 2222 and ask for the cardiac arrest team and bring back the cardiac arrest trolley.
- **Support the victim:**
 - If you are able to, take the weight off the ligature by supporting as much of the patient's weight as you safely can.
- **Cut the ligature away from it's anchor point:**
 - Using Tuff Cut scissors or a ligature cutter, cut supporting anchor away from anchor point, preserving the knot for evidence.
- **Rescue the victim:**
 - If unresponsive, safely guide the victim to the floor.
- **Cut the ligature away from the patients neck:**
 - Using a ligature cutter at the side of the neck, along the groove below the ear, avoiding direct pressure on spine or trachea.
 - If the ligature is too big for a ligature cutter, e.g. clothing, towel, etc, use Tuff Cut scissors to cut the ligature.
- **Assess the victim:**
 - Responsive and signs of life: Use an A, B, C, D, E approach.
 - Unresponsive and no signs of life: begin basic life support.

Notes on equipment:

Tuff Cut scissors and a purpose made ligature cutter are on every cardiac arrest trolley.

