

# Nose Bleeding

## Why do people get nosebleeds?

Nasal cavities are lined with mucous membrane that is filled with blood vessels. There is a concentrated area of blood vessels prone to bleeding located just below the bridge of the nose. Nasal membranes can dry out and crack, and when the membrane is injured or broken, nosebleeds result. Blood leaks from the broken vessels into the nasal cavity and out of the nostrils, or sometimes down the back of the throat.

## What contributes to nose bleeding?

- Sinus infection or cold
- Trauma or injury
- Allergies
- Runny nose
- High blood pressure
- Alcohol abuse
- Inherited bleeding problems
- Advanced liver disease
- Nose-picking
- Dry or hot air
- Changes in temperature
- Forceful nose blowing
- Exposure to cigarette smoke
- Some medications (see below)
- Low platelet count
- Anatomic issues such as from a broken nose

## How can I help prevent nosebleeds?

- Do not smoke and avoid inhaling secondhand smoke
- Do not take any medications that will thin the blood (i.e. Aspirin, Ibuprofen, and Naproxen)
- Control your blood pressure
- Wear scarves to cover the nose in the winter
- Increase fluid intake
- Humidify the air with a cool mist humidifier
- Apply lubricant to the nose four (4) times per day
  - Ayr Gel
  - Normal saline nasal spray
  - Ponaris
- Avoid nose trauma or picking

## How do I treat a nosebleed?

- **Pressure and Ice** – Pinch the soft part of the nose between your thumb and index finger for two minutes before using additional products and after other products are used until bleeding resolves. Press firmly towards the face, compressing the pinched parts of the nose against the bones of the face. Sit quietly with head higher than your heart. Sit up or lie down with your head elevated about 30-45 degrees. Do not lay flat or put your head between your legs. Both pressure and ice will decrease the blood flow to your nose and slow bleeding.
  - **Nosebudd** – reusable, frozen ice pack
  - **Instant Ice Pack** – single use ice pack can be used in conjunction with nose clip
  - **Nose clip** – reusable
- **Topical Treatment** – Use pressure and ice for at least two minutes before using any of the products below.
  - Before using the products below, gently blow nose to clear the nose of clots. A clot acts like a wedge in the door. Blood vessels have elastic fibers that need to close around bleeding site. After using one of the treatments below, return to using pressure and ice until bleeding subsides. Multiple treatments below may be recommended, and you should use pressure and ice for at least two minutes in between different products.
    - Afrin (must be age 6 or older to use) 1-2 sprays in affected nostril, not to exceed use of more than two times a day or more than three days in a row.
    - Salt Pork – must be prepared in advance. Buy salt pork in the grocery store (it is packaged like bacon). Cut small pieces about the size of your little finger. Using a thread or dental floss and a needle, place a string through one end and tie a loop. This allows for easy removal from the nose. Wrap the plugs in wax paper and place in freezer. When bleeding occurs, remove from freezer, unwrap (you may need to run under warm water) and place in nose frozen with string hanging out of nostril. Leave in place for one hour, applying pressure over the plug.
    - NosebleedQR or Gentle QR – Roll applicator to load it with as much powder as possible, hold breath and roll applicator

- around the nostril. Warming or stinging may occur. Apply pressure and ice after use.
- NasalCease – twist the end and pack into bleeding nostril. Remove within 30 minutes. Apply pressure and ice after use.
  - Aminocaproic Acid (Amicar) liquid on a gauze – remove Amicar from vial with provided syringe and needed and squirt into white ointment jar with blue lid. Saturate gauze in liquid and pack into affected nostril. Remove after 30 minutes. Apply pressure after use. **Please note a prescription is needed for this medication.**
- **Prevention of Re-bleeding** – it may take 7-10 days for the area in your nose to heal.
    - **Aminocaproic Acid (Amicar) nasal spray** – one spray to the affected nostril every four hours while awake for seven days following a nosebleed.
    - **Do not blow your nose once the bleeding has stopped.**
    - Do not strain with bowel movements. Use stool softener.
    - Do not strain or bend down to lift anything heavy.
    - Stay on soft, cool or room temperature diet. No hot liquids for at least 24 hours.
    - Do not smoke and avoid exposure to secondhand smoke.
    - Rest following a nosebleed. No sports that day.

## When should I call my doctor or report to the emergency room?

- If bleeding cannot be stopped or keeps occurring
- If blood loss is large
- If you feel weak or faint, presumably from blood loss
- Vomiting blood or “coffee-ground” looking material

**For more information, call 775-982-3892.**