

# Discharge information after Nosebleeds (Epistaxis)

## Who is this information for?

This information is for patients, families and carers following a nosebleed (epistaxis).

## What is the first aid for a nosebleed?

With the right first aid, most nosebleeds will stop on their own.

- **DO:** Gently blow your nose to get rid of Some of the clots that have formed inside Your nostrils.
- **DO:** Sit up and lean forward.
- **DO:** Breath through the mouth, allowing the blood to run out (or spit it out) without swallowing it.
- **DO:** Squeeze the soft portion of the nose firmly using your thumb and forefinger.
  - **DON'T:** grip the bony bridge of your nose
- **DO:** Maintain this pressure for:
  - 10-15 minutes (adults)
  - 5 minutes (children)
  - **DON'T:** release the pressure every so often to check whether the bleeding has stopped.
- **DO:** Suck on some ice cubes +/- place an ice-pack to the bridge of the nose.
  - Not only is this relieving, but it can help the blood vessels constrict and slow the bleeding.
  - This step is not necessary, but many people like to do it.
- **DO:** Rest quietly.
- **DO:** follow all the steps outlined above, and if your nose continues to bleed, repeat all the steps once more, applying pressure for a total of at least **30 minutes**.



- **DO:** if still bleeding – seek medical help.

### When to seek help

You should seek emergency medical care if:

- bleed is massive, won't stop, or makes it hard to breathe
- bleed is after an injury, such as being hit in the face, and you are concerned you or your child could have other injuries (**e.g. broken nose**)
- bleed is after recent nasal surgery, and you are concerned.
- If you have other additional symptoms such as chest pain, multiple bruises, other areas of bleeding.

### How do I manage normal activities after a nosebleed?

- Rest quietly for the next 12-24 hours.
- Do not pick or blow your nose for a week. You can sniff to clear your nose if necessary.
- Avoid strenuous exercise, straining or lifting heavy items for a week.
- Allow food and drinks to cool before eating for a week.
- Use lukewarm water for showers or baths for a week.
- Stop smoking.
- Avoid drinking alcohol.
- Use paracetamol/**Panadeine**® for pain relief and avoid aspirin.
- If prescribed **aspirin**®, or other blood thinners (**e.g. Warfarin**®, **Plavix**®, **Xarelto**®, **Pradaxa**®) discuss this with your health practitioner.
- Use medications as prescribed. Some people with dry skin in their nose may find that ointment or nasal sprays may help.

## Information for patients, families and carers

- If you suffer from nose bleeds due to high blood pressure, visit your health practitioner for monitoring.

### What should I expect?

- Nosebleeds may cause minor discomfort.
- Some people may have several nosebleeds over a period of a few days or weeks.
- In the elderly, nosebleeds can come from the back of the nose.
- Sometimes the bleeding is due to an underlying bleeding problem.

### How can I prevent nosebleeds?

Measures to prevent nosebleeds may include:

- Using a humidifier.
- Drinking plenty of fluids.
- Using an ointment on the affected area (such as **Vaseline®**, **FESS® Nasal Gel**).
- Using a saline nasal spray.
- Avoiding strenuous activity or heavy lifting.
- Using headgear when playing sport.
- Avoiding cigarette smoke.



You can contact your ENT Specialist at the Melbourne ENT Group (MEG):

- Phone: 1300-952-808



## Information for patients, families and carers

- Email: [admin@melbentgroup.com.au](mailto:admin@melbentgroup.com.au)
- Website: [www.melbentgroup.com.au](http://www.melbentgroup.com.au)

Your GP is also the best contact for ongoing care and concerns.

### Further information

The Department of Health has published an Emergency Department factsheet on Nosebleeds. This is available online at [www.health.vic.gov.au/edfactsheets](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/edfactsheets).



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