

NOSEBLEED

DEFINITION

Nosebleeds (epistaxis) are very common throughout childhood. They are usually caused by dryness of the nasal lining plus the normal rubbing and picking that all children do when the nose becomes blocked. Vigorous nose blowing can also cause bleeding. All of these behaviors are increased in children with nasal allergies.

HOME CARE

Lean Forward and Spit Out Any Blood. Have your child sit up and lean forward so he does not have to swallow the blood. Have a basin available so he can spit out any blood that drains into his throat. Blow his nose free of any large clots that might interfere with applying pressure.

Squeeze the Soft Part of the Nose. Tightly pinch the soft parts of the nose against the center wall for 10 minutes. Don't release the pressure until 10 minutes are up. If the bleeding continues, you may not be pressing on the right spot. During this time, your child will have to breathe through his mouth.

If Bleeding Continues, Use Vasoconstrictor Nose Drops and Squeeze Again. If the nosebleed hasn't stopped, insert a piece of gauze covered with vasoconstrictor nose drops (for example, Neo-Synephrine) or petroleum jelly into the nostril. Squeeze again for 10 minutes. Leave the gauze in for another 10 minutes before removing it. If bleeding persists, call our office but continue the pressure in the meantime. Swallowed blood is irritating to the stomach. Don't be surprised if it is vomited up.

Prevention

—A small amount of petroleum jelly applied twice each day to the center wall (septum) inside the nose is often helpful for relieving dryness and irritation.

Common Mistakes in Treating Nosebleed

- Increasing the humidity in the room at night by using a humidifier may also be helpful.
- Get your child into the habit of putting 2 or 3 drops of warm water in each nostril before blowing a stuffy nose.
- Avoid aspirin. One aspirin can increase the tendency of the body to bleed easily for up to a week and can make nosebleeds last much longer.
- If your child has nasal allergies, treating them with antihistamines will help break the itching-bleeding cycle.

- A cold washcloth applied to the forehead, back of the neck, or under the upper lip does not help to stop a nosebleed.
- Pressing on the bony part of the nose does not stop a nosebleed.

- Avoid packing the nose with anything, because when it is removed, bleeding usually recurs.



CALL OUR OFFICE

IMMEDIATELY if

- The bleeding does not stop after 20 minutes of direct pressure.
- Your child faints or feels dizzy when he stands up.
- During regular hours if
- Nosebleeds occur daily even after petroleum jelly and humidification are used.
- You have other concerns or questions.