

# Blood Nose (“Epistaxis”)

## First Aid for Nose Bleeds

- Sit down and lean slightly forward so any blood tends to run out rather than down the throat.
- Breathe through the mouth, allowing any blood to run/spit out into a towel or bowl.
- Hold the soft portion of the nose and squeeze firmly between the thumb and index finger. Maintain this hold for 10 minutes. **NO STOPPING AND LOOKING.**
- If possible, suck on some ice and place a cold towel over your face/back of neck.
- Keep resting until the bleeding stops. Try to control your breathing and heart rate.
- Repeat the above if the bleeding recurs after you remove the pressure. If it continues after two full periods of pressure, consider seeking medical help.

If these measures stop the bleeding, rest and do not blow your nose. Follow the advice below to avoid further bleeding. If bleeding is severe or recurs, seek medical advice.

*If you have any concerns, ring the nearest Emergency Department or contact your local doctor.*

## What To Do After a Nose Bleed or Nasal Cautery

- For the next week:
  - Do not blow your nose or pick your nose with a tissue or finger.
  - Avoid hot showers or baths. Use lukewarm water.
  - Do not drink hot fluids.
  - Avoid hot food; allow it to cool before eating. Avoid spicy food.
  - Avoid alcohol.
- Reduce (or ideally stop) smoking.
- Use paracetamol (Panadol, Panamax etc) for pain relief. Avoid aspirin, dispirin and other anti-inflammatory pain relief medications (e.g. Brufen, Nurofen, Voltaren, Naprosyn, Mobic, Indocid etc) **for at least two weeks.**
- If prescribed aspirin by your doctor please discuss whether it would be safe to stop this for two weeks with him/her. In most cases stopping it for this time is very safe. If you are getting recurrent nosebleeds, please discuss stopping aspirin altogether. If you are on other blood thinning medications (e.g. warfarin, clopidogrel, Plavix, Iscover), please discuss whether these can be stopped or the dose reduced, particularly if you are getting recurrent nosebleeds.
- Use medications for your nose as prescribed by your family doctor or ENT Surgeon.
- After a nosebleed, if your nose feels crusty or blocked, rinse the nose out with salty water. Add 2 teaspoons of salt and 1 teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda to a litre of water. Cup a small amount in the palm of your hand and sniff it into your nose. Repeat this morning and night, and as often as you wish during the day, until your nose feels clean and well healed. Store the remaining solution in a clean jar for up to three days.
- Have your local doctor monitor your blood pressure. High blood pressure will not start a nose bleed, but will prolong any that occur, and prolonged high blood pressure in itself is dangerous to your health overall.
- If you get recurrent nose bleeds, consider smearing a little Vaseline just inside the nostril of the affected side, twice a day until a few days after the bleeding stops. Use the tip of your little finger to wipe a little on the side wall of the nostril, squeeze the nostril closed to wipe it onto the middle of the nose, then sniff to have the airflow smear it along the deeper part of the nose. Don't use a cotton bud to wipe it into the nose, as this is not necessary and might start a new nosebleed itself.