

Patient FAQs for Nosebleeds

1. How can I prevent a nosebleed?

- Nosebleeds can be reduced or prevented by eliminating contributing factors such as digital trauma (nose picking) and vigorous nose blowing, as well as by using proper nasal hygiene. Moistening and lubrication of the nose with nasal saline and gels can be helpful. A humidifier at the bedside may also be helpful.

2. I have an active nosebleed. What can I do?

- A nosebleed can be stressful, so keeping calm and knowing how to stop a nosebleed ahead of time can help. Leaning forward and pinching the soft part of the nose for at least 5 minutes is one of the first things to do. If the nosebleed slows, continue holding for a full 15 minutes (See Figures 2a and 2b).

3. Can I use any over-the-counter medications to help if my nose is bleeding?

- Nasal saline gel or spray can help moisturize the tissues inside the nose. Oxymetazoline or phenylephrine are nasal spray decongestants that can help slow nosebleeds. Blow the nose to clear any clots, and then spray two sprays in the bleeding nostril and continue to hold the soft part of the nose for 5 minutes. You may repeat this once.

4. My nosebleed won't stop! What should I do?

- If your nosebleed does not stop despite trying the above methods, then you should call a medical professional. If the bleeding is severe, persistent, or you feel weak or lightheaded, then seek immediate care at an emergency room department or call 911.

5. I saw my ENT and my nose was cauterized. Do I have any restrictions?

- You must treat your nose with care to allow the area to heal. Avoid nose blowing, strenuous activity, heavy lifting, or placing any cotton or tissues in the nose for at least a week. You may use saline gel or spray to help lubricate the nose one to three times a day.

6. I am on a blood thinner medication and my nose often bleeds. Should I stop taking this medication?

- You should promptly check with the clinician who has prescribed the blood thinning medication, as these medications are usually given to treat or prevent serious medical problems. If your nosebleed is severe, do not take additional doses of blood thinner until you are evaluated, but such evaluation should not be delayed.