

COPING WITH NOSEBLEEDS

Many people experience nosebleeds, especially people with a bleeding disorder. Nosebleeds can be made worse by weather (i.e. dry winter air, humid summer air, pollen or ragweed in the air) or by other factors such as picking the nose, bumping the nose, or rubbing the nose. For many, the nosebleeds will resolve within a few minutes without any intervention. However, for those who have nosebleeds that happen frequently, last a long time without stopping, or are heavy and gushing, a nosebleed can interfere with your daily life.

To help prevent nosebleeds:

1. Use a humidifier at night. Make sure to clean the humidifier regularly following the manufacturer's instructions.
2. Apply saline nasal spray or nasal gel 4 times per day. Some over-the-counter brands include:
 - a. Ayr-gel™ or nasal mist
 - b. Ocean® nasal spray
3. Apply Neosporin, Vaseline, or Olive Oil to the inside of the nose gently with a cotton swab several times per day.
4. Use an antihistamine medicine to help decrease the swelling of the tissue in the nose, especially if you are prone to allergies. Follow the directions on the package for dosage.
5. Ask your doctor if nasal steroids like Flonase® might be helpful.
5. Do not pick your nose!
6. Blow your nose gently.

Here are some helpful hints for dealing with troublesome (frequent, heavy, or nonstop) nosebleeds:

1. Pinch the soft part of the nose firmly for 15 minutes... no peeking!! Do not lay down or tilt your head back. If possible, tilt your head slightly forward.
 - a. You do not want blood to run down the back of your throat into your stomach, as blood is very irritating to the stomach and can cause vomiting.
 - b. If the nosebleed continues after pinching for 15 minutes, then pinch again for another 10 minutes..., again, no peeking!
 - c. To help pinch the nose and to allow both hands to be free, nose clips can be used.
2. If pinching does not stop the nosebleed, here are several ways to get the bleeding under control:
 - a. Cold compress: Place ice or cold pack (wrapped in washcloth) on the bridge of the nose to help stop the bleeding.



- b. Salt pork nasal plugs:
 - i. Buy a package of salt pork at the grocery store. It comes packaged like bacon.
 - ii. Cut small pieces about the size of your little finger (long and thin).
 - iii. Use a piece of thread or dental floss and a needle, and go through one end of the piece of salt pork and make a loop. This will allow it to be easily removed from your nose.
 - iv. Wrap these plugs in wax paper and put in your freezer.
 - v. When your nose is bleeding, unwrap one of these plugs (you may need to run under warm water for a minute to unwrap it), and place it gently up your nose, leaving the string hanging out. Gently squeeze the soft part of your nose with the plug inside your nose.
 - vi. After about 1 hour, remove the plug gently.
3. If the above measures are not effective, you may need to speak with a nurse to discuss other options.

Medicines your doctor may prescribe are:

- a. Estrogen Cream: Estrogen cream can be applied to the inside of the nose. However, there are some side effects with this form of treatment that need to be considered and discussed with your hematologist before using this treatment. Also, the estrogen cream requires a prescription from your doctor.
- b. Amicar®: This is an oral medication that comes in pill or liquid form. It can be used topically at the site that is bleeding in the nose or taken orally to help maintain a clot and prevent further nosebleeds from occurring.
- c. Desmopressin (DDAVP): If the above suggestions are not helpful in controlling your nosebleeds, you can contact our office to discuss the option of desmopressin (DDAVP). DDAVP does not prevent nosebleeds but is used in response to a nosebleed and is used if pinching (as described above) does not stop the nosebleed, or many nosebleeds occur in the matter of a short period of time. DDAVP requires a prescription and must be given in the hospital or clinic setting through an IV catheter.

Remember, after getting a nosebleed to stop, do NOT blow or pick your nose. Blowing or picking will dislodge the clot that has formed and the bleeding may resume.

If you have questions regarding this information, please call your CCBBD Nurse Coordinator at (414) 257-2424.