

Nosebleeds

Although they can be scary, nosebleeds are usually not a serious problem. Nosebleeds can occur at any age but are most common in children aged 2-10 years. Most nosebleeds stop on their own and can be treated safely at home.

What Causes Nosebleeds?

The front part of the nose contains fragile blood vessels that can be easily damaged. Most nosebleeds occur in the front part of the nasal septum close to the nostrils. The most common causes of nosebleeds in children are:

- Nose picking
- Injury to the nose
- Blowing the nose too hard
- Air that is too dry
- Colds and allergies
- Certain medication (such as nasal sprays)
- Clotting disorders that can be hereditary

How to treat nosebleeds:

- With your child sitting upright, tilt the head slightly forward (NOT backward), to avoid swallowing blood
- Pinch the nostrils together. Press firmly for 5-10 minutes. Do NOT pinch the nasal bridge or "bony part"
- Apply ice or cold compress to the bridge of the nose
- Older children may hold an ice cube in their mouth to slow the bleeding
- Do not place tissue or gauze inside your child's nose

When to seek Emergency care:

- If you are unable to stop the nosebleed after 20 minutes of applying pressure
- If the nosebleed is the result of a fall or trauma to the head (may indicate a more serious problem)
- If your child has dizziness, weakness, or difficulty breathing

How to prevent nosebleeds:

- Keep your child's nails short and discourage nose-picking
- Treat allergies, if needed
- Counteract the effects of dry air by using a humidifier
- Wear protective athletic equipment when participating in sports that could cause a nose injury

Extra Steps Your Doctor Recommends:

These may help nose bleeds from starting

- Nasal Saline Spray: Administer 2-3 sprays to each nostril 3-4 times per day.
- Ayr Gel: Apply 3-4 times per day and at bedtime. Use a clean finger (without long nails), or directly squeeze tube into nostril to apply.
- Room Humidifier: Use at night by your child's bed. Keep clean according to manufacturer's instructions to prevent mold growth.
- Bacitracin ointment: Apply 1-2 times per day and at bedtime for 10 days. Use a clean finger, cotton swab or directly squeeze tube into the nostril to apply.

If nose bleed is not stopping with direct pressure:

- Afrin: Administer 1-2 sprays to each nostril for bleeding that has not stopped after 10 minutes of direct pressure. Do not use Afrin for more than 2 days in a row.