

## Following your nosebleed

### What causes nosebleeds?

Nosebleeds usually occur from the nasal septum (middle partition of the nose) where blood vessels are often fragile.

Certain medical conditions can make nose bleeds more frequent. These include:

- blood thinning medication (eg aspirin, warfarin, clopidogrel, rivaroxaban and others)
- high blood pressure and drinking a lot of alcohol
- trauma (either direct eg nose picking or blowing the nose too hard) or from an injury such as a broken nose
- inherited conditions that thin the blood such as Haemophilia or Von Willebrand.

Often the cause of a nosebleed is unknown.

### What if my nose starts to bleed again?

Follow this guide to help stop the bleeding:

1. Remain calm.
2. Sit or stand upright (don't lie down).
3. Apply compression by pinching with your thumb and index finger to the soft part of your nose just above the nostrils **continuously** for 20 minutes. Do not stop to see if the bleeding has stopped until the 20 minutes have passed.
4. Lean forward and breathe through your mouth.
5. Place an icepack (or a bag of frozen peas or ice cubes wrapped in a tea towel) at the bridge of your nose.
6. Do not blow your nose or swallow any blood – spit it out.

7. Once bleeding has stopped, do not blow your nose or touch it for at least two hours.
8. Avoid hot drinks during this period.
9. If the nosebleed has not stopped within 30 minutes attend a Minor Injuries Unit.

### **If you are discharged with absorbable sponge-like dressing in your nose:**

1. Do not blow your nose.
2. Do not attempt to remove the nasal dressing – this will dissolve with salt-water irrigation.
3. You will need to wash your nose with salt-water three times a day. You will be given a 20ml syringe and need to make the following salt-water recipe every day (alternatively, you could obtain Sterimar saltwater spray from any pharmacy):
  - one pint of water – boil first and cool to room temperature
  - half a teaspoon of fine cooking salt
  - half a teaspoon of sodium bicarbonate (omit if not available).
4. If bleeding persists despite the nasal dressing (either from the front of your nose or in the back of your throat), return to your nearest ED or Minor Injuries Unit.

### **If you are discharged with non-absorbable nasal packing:**

This will need to be removed after 24-48 hours. If this is the case, please follow these instructions:

- Do not attempt to remove the nasal pack.
- If the nasal pack falls out and your nose starts bleeding again heavily, return to your nearest ED or Minor Injuries Unit immediately.
- A follow-up appointment will be made for you in the ENT Department or community for a practitioner to remove the pack and re-examine your nose.

**It is very important that you keep this appointment.**

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690