

Nosebleed

Your health and safety are very important to us. Because of the large number of people with the flu, hospitals and emergency rooms are very busy. As a result, we are closely evaluating who we can take in the ambulance to the hospital.

We have evaluated that you do not need to go in the ambulance to the hospital at this time. Paramedics are giving you this sheet to help you care for yourself at home.

You can get medical care at a clinic, urgent care center or an emergency room. If you decide to do so, you will need to get to these places on your own. Remember hospitals are seeing a lot of patients with the flu. If you go to a hospital you risk getting infected with the flu.

The skin inside your nose is fragile and filled with many blood vessels. That is why even a minor injury to your nose sometimes causes bleeding. Hard nose blowing, nose picking, and colds can cause bleeding from your nose. Dry winter air can dry out the lining of your nose and cause it to bleed. Normally nosebleeds are not a cause for concern and can be easily controlled at home by taking some simple steps. Certain medical conditions such as conditions that require you be on blood thinners can make nosebleeds difficult to control.

Steps to take in controlling a nosebleed on your own:

- Sit or stand up and lean your head forward.
- **DO NOT** tip your head back as this will just cause the blood to drain down your throat and into your stomach. This may cause an upset stomach.
- Slide your fingers over the upper bony bridge of your nose down onto the beginning of the soft part of your nose. Firmly pinch where the soft part of your nose begins and hold it there for 10 minutes. **DO NOT** let go during this time. Constant pressure is what is needed to allow a clot to form where it is bleeding. If your nose does not stop bleeding after 10 minutes, try it for 20 minutes.
- If bleeding is controlled after attempting this, you must be careful to not blow, pick or manipulate your nose as doing so may cause the clot that has formed to break away thus starting the bleeding process again. If you have drainage from your nose, gently dab you nostrils. Keep in mind that coughing and sneezing may cause bleeding to start.
- If the air is very dry, try a humidifier to add moisture to the air. This may help prevent further occurrences.

When to Go to the Emergency Department

Most nosebleeds are not a medical emergency. If you have tried the steps listed above and bleeding continues, you should seek medical care. You should also seek immediate care if you have had a head injury or if you:

- Have been bleeding more than 20-30 minutes, or if it is severe bleeding.
- If you feel weak or faint.
- If you have trouble breathing.
- If you feel blood continuing to flow down the back of your throat.

What to Expect in the Emergency Department

- You will be examined and may have blood tests.
- You may be given medicated nose drops to stop the bleeding.
- Gauze may be packed into your nose to put pressure on the vessel and help stop bleeding.
- The bleeding vessel may be cauterized. During this procedure, your nose is first numbed so you should not feel any pain. Then the vessel is burned with an electrical device or chemical.

This information is to help you care for a person who has a cold or viral illness.

The evaluation and/or treatment by the paramedics today are not to replace the recommendation of a doctor.

You can get medical care by a doctor on your own.

You should call 911 for any medical symptom, concerns that happen after we leave today.



These Home Care Instructions are for use during specified times of severe pandemic influenza, courtesy of the Metro Region EMS System, Metro Emergency Services Board, 2099 W. University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55014-3431