

Nosebleed

Causes

- Nosebleeds are common because of the rich blood supply of the nose. Common causes include:
- Dryness of the nasal lining (e.g., from forced air furnace in winter)
- Antihistamines (Reason: they also dry the nose)
- Vigorous nose blowing
- Ibuprofen and aspirin (Reason: increase bleeding tendency)
- Suctioning the nose can sometimes cause bleeding
- Picking or rubbing the nose
- Predisposing factors that make the nasal lining more fragile: nasal [allergies](#), [colds and sinus](#) infections

Care Advice

1. Reassurance:
 - a. Nosebleeds are common.
 - b. You should be able to stop the bleeding if you use the correct technique.
2. Apply Pressure:
 - a. Gently squeeze the soft parts of the lower nose against the center wall for 10 minutes. This should apply continuous pressure to the bleeding point.
 - b. Use the thumb and index finger in a pinching manner.
 - c. If the bleeding continues, move your point of pressure.
 - d. Have your child sit up and breathe through the mouth during this procedure.
 - e. If rebleeds, use the same technique again.
3. Insert Gauze:
 - a. If pressure alone fails, insert a gauze wet with a few decongestant nose drops (e.g., nonprescription Afrin). (Reason: The gauze helps to apply pressure and nose drops shrink the blood vessels).
 - b. If not available or less than one year old, use petroleum jelly applied to gauze.
 - c. Repeat the process of gently squeezing the lower soft parts of the nose for 10 minutes.
4. Prevent Recurrent Nosebleeds:
 - a. If the air in your home is dry, use a humidifier to keep the nose from drying out.
 - b. Apply petroleum jelly to the center wall of the nose twice a day to promote healing.



- c. For nose blowing, blow gently.
 - d. For nose suctioning, don't put the suction tip very far inside. Also, move it gently.
 - e. Avoid aspirin and ibuprofen (Reason: increase bleeding tendency).
5. Expected Course: Over 99% of nosebleeds will stop following 10 minutes of direct pressure if you press on the right spot. After swallowing blood from a nosebleed, your child may vomit a little blood or pass a dark stool tomorrow.

When To Call

Call 911 Now (your child may need an ambulance) If

- Fainted or too weak to stand

Call Your Doctor Now (night or day) If

- You think your child has a serious injury
- Bleeding does not stop after 10 minutes of direct pressure applied correctly and tried twice
- New skin bruises or bleeding gums not caused by an injury are also present
- Large amount of blood has been lost

Call Your Doctor Within 24 Hours (between 8 am and 4 pm) If

- You think your child needs to be seen

Call Your Doctor During Weekday Office Hours If

- You have other questions or concerns
- Age under 1 year old
- New-onset nosebleeds are occurring frequently
- Hard-to-stop nosebleeds are a [recurrent chronic problem](#)
- Easy bleeding present in other family members

Adapted from The American Academy of Pediatrics (2011) at www.healthychildren.org

