

Nosebleeds

Most nosebleeds in children originate from the front part of the nose. The nasal cavity is divided into right and left sides by the nasal septum. This structure has many small arteries and veins that can bleed from minimal trauma. In children, trauma may be 'digital' (nose picking), rubbing, sneezing, from dry air, or frequent nose blowing. Nosebleeds may take place while your child is asleep, or spontaneously during the day.

Basic measures to try to control nosebleeds are first to see if your child is picking his or her nose. Check their fingernails! If the air is dry where you live, a humidifier may help. Over the counter sprays that have saline (saltwater) only are potentially beneficial and safest for children. Nasal decongestant sprays, especially for more than a day or two, can be drying and make bleeding more problematic.

For acute nosebleeds, try to stay calm. The more excitement- the greater the blood pressure and heart rate will rise causing more bleeding. Gently but firmly pinch the nostrils together and sit up right with your head forward. If there is a lot of clot; blow to remove this, apply 2 squirts of topical decongestant (Afrin, Neosynephrine) and reapply continuous pressure for 5 minutes.

For the most part, nosebleeds may simply be an annoyance. HOWEVER, recurrent severe nosebleeds (those that don't stop on their own or with gentle pressure) need to be evaluated. There are several rare, although not unheard of, nasal growths that can present themselves as nosebleeds in children. There are also some rare, although not unheard of, bleeding disorders that may first present as nosebleeds.

For chronic nose bleeds, Use lots of saline nose spray and an antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin Ointment in a 15 gram tube. This has a pointed tip you can insert into the nose, the soft part, and then squeeze the nose from the outside to spread it around. Do this 2 or 3 times a day. In most cases of bleeding the nose is infected and the antibiotic ointment helps. If your nose is too dry – use an enhanced nasal moisturizing spray and/or gel. If you are taking aspirin or aspirin substitutes, including non steroidal anti-inflammatory medication, this may cause you to bleed.