



## Nosebleeds

### Signs & Symptoms

- Bleeding from a nostril.
- Bleeding from the nose and down the back of the throat.

### Causes

Nosebleeds are often caused by broken blood vessels just inside the nose. Risk factors include:

- A cold or allergies.
- A dry environment.
- Frequent nose blowing and picking.
- Using too much nasal spray.
- A punch or other blow to the nose.

A nosebleed is serious when heavy bleeding from deep within the nose is hard to stop. This type occurs most often in the elderly. It can be caused by: Hardening of nasal blood vessels; high blood pressure; and medicines that treat blood clots.

### Treatment

Self-care treats most nosebleeds. A doctor can pack the nostril to stop the bleeding or do a treatment that seals the blood vessel that bleeds.

### Questions to Ask

Is blood from a nosebleed going down the back of the throat or backward into the mouth even though you are pinching the nostril shut?



NO

*Flowchart continued in next column*

Did the nosebleed follow a blow to the head or nose or a severe headache? Or, does the nosebleed occur in a person taking blood-thinning medicine?

YES



NO

In the past 48 hours, did 3 or more nosebleeds occur and did each one take longer than 10 minutes to stop?

YES



NO

Did the nosebleed start after taking newly prescribed medicine? Or, do nosebleeds occur often?

YES



NO



### Self-Care / Prevention

- Sit with your head leaning forward. Pinch the nostrils shut. Use your thumb and forefinger to gently squeeze the nose's midsection.



*Pinching the Nostrils Shut*

- Hold for up to 20 minutes without stopping. Use a clock to time this. Breathe through your mouth while you do this. Repeat a second time, if needed. If a second attempt fails, go to an urgent care center or hospital emergency department. Don't take aspirin or other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.
- For the next 24 hours, elevate your head above the level of your heart. Also, try not to blow your nose, lift heavy objects, or exercise hard.
- Use a humidifier or cool-mist vaporizer to add moisture to household air.