

Nasal Contusion

Your nose has bruising (contusion). You don't appear to have any broken bones. A contusion may cause pain, swelling, and stuffiness of the nose. Sometimes you may have bleeding.

Home care

Use an ice pack on your nose for 10 minutes at a time. Do this every 2 hours during the first 24 hours to ease pain and swelling. Then use the ice pack 4 times a day for the next 2 days. You can make your own ice pack by putting ice cubes or crushed ice in a plastic bag. Wrap the bag in a thin towel.

Medicines:

- You may use acetaminophen to control pain, unless another medicine was prescribed. If you have chronic liver or kidney disease, talk with your doctor before using this medicine.
- Talk with your doctor before taking ibuprofen to help control the pain.
- Talk with your doctor if you are taking aspirin or blood thinners (warfarin). These will make it more likely to get nose bleeding. Your doctor may need to change your dose.

General care:

- Don't blow your nose for the first 2 days. Then, do so gently so you don't cause bleeding.
- Don't drink alcohol or hot liquids for the next 2 days. Alcohol or hot liquids can dilate blood vessels in your nose. This can cause bleeding.

Special note on concussions

If you had any symptoms of a concussion today, don't return to sports or any activity that could result in another head injury.

These are symptoms of a concussion:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Headache
- Memory loss
- Loss of consciousness

Wait until all of your symptoms are gone and your provider says it's OK to resume your activity. A second head injury before fully recovering from the first one can lead to serious brain injury.

Follow-up care

Follow up with your doctor, or as advised. If your nose looks crooked when the swelling goes down, make an appointment with a nose specialist (ENT doctor) within 7 days of the injury.

If you had X-rays or CT scans taken, they will be reviewed by a radiologist. You will be told of any new findings that may affect your care.

When to seek medical advice

Call your health care provider right away if any of these occur:

- Bleeding from your nose even after you have pinched your nostrils together for 15 minutes
- Swelling, pain or redness on your face that gets worse
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C)
- Unable to breathe from both sides of your nose after swelling goes down
- Sinus pain
- Repeated vomiting
- Severe headache or dizziness
- Headache or dizziness that gets worse
- Unusual drowsiness, or unable to wake up as usual
- Confusion or change in behavior or speech
- Convulsion (seizure)

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Nosebleed

The skin inside your nose is fragile and filled with blood vessels. That's why even a slight injury to your nose sometimes may cause bleeding. Hard nose blowing, dry winter air, colds, and nose-picking can also cause nosebleeds. Medicines such as warfarin, aspirin, and other blood thinners can make it more likely to have a nosebleed that is difficult to stop. Normally, nosebleeds aren't a cause for concern. But in some cases, they can mean that you have a more serious health problem. Know when to seek medical care for a nosebleed.

When to go to the emergency room (ER)

Most nosebleeds aren't a medical emergency. In fact, you often can treat them yourself. But see your healthcare provider if you have nosebleeds often. And seek care right away if you:

- Have a head injury
- Have bleeding that lasts more than 15 to 30 minutes or is severe
- Feel weak or faint
- Have trouble breathing

What to expect in the ER

- You will be examined and may have blood tests.
- You may be given medicated nose drops to stop the nosebleed.
- The doctor may pack gauze into your nose to put pressure on the vessel and help stop bleeding.
- The bleeding vessel may be cauterized. During this procedure, the vessel is burned with an electrical device or chemical. Your nose is first numbed so you won't feel any pain.
- In rare cases, you may need surgery to control the bleeding.

Home care for a nosebleed

- Don't blow your nose for 12 hours after the bleeding stops. This will allow a strong blood clot to form. Don't pick your nose. This may restart bleeding.
- Don't drink alcohol or hot liquids for the next 2 days. Alcohol and hot liquids can dilate blood vessels in your nose. This can cause bleeding to start again.
- Don't take ibuprofen, naproxen, or medicines that contain aspirin. These thin the blood and may cause your nose to bleed. You may take acetaminophen for pain, unless another pain medicine was prescribed.
- If the bleeding starts again, sit up and lean forward to prevent swallowing blood. Pinch your nose tightly on both sides for 10 to 15 minutes. Time yourself. Don't release the pressure on your nose until 10 minutes is up. If bleeding doesn't stop, continue to pinch your nose. Call your healthcare provider.
- If you have a cold, allergies, or dry nasal membranes, lubricate the nasal passages. Apply a small amount of petroleum jelly inside the nose with a cotton swab twice a day (morning and night).
- Don't overheat your home. This can dry the air and make your condition worse.
- Put a humidifier in the room where you sleep. This will add moisture to the air.
- Use a saline nasal spray to keep nasal passages moist.
- Don't pick your nose. Keep fingernails trimmed to decrease risk of bleeds.
- Don't smoke.
- Follow all other home care instructions from your healthcare provider.

- Call your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns.

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