



## **NOSEBLEEDS – EPISTAXIS**

### **What Causes Nosebleeds?**

Nosebleeds (epistaxis) have numerous causes. Nose picking is the most common cause of nosebleeds.. Other causes include dry air, allergies, colds, high blood pressure, topical nasal medications, and surgery. There are many other rare, but serious causes. Most of the time, we don't know the exact cause of the bleeding. We do know that nosebleeds are much more common in the winter when the air is dry. Nosebleeds are much harder to stop if patients are on blood thinners (Coumadin, aspirin, Heparin)

### **How are Nosebleeds Treated?**

Holding pressure on the soft part of the nose for 10 minutes can control the majority of nosebleeds. Afrin is a nasal decongestant and should be the first line of therapy. If Afrin and holding pressure does not stop the bleeding, then call your ENT or go to the ER. Health professionals can use a variety of packing that will be used to exert pressure in the nose or contain anti-bleeding medication. If a Rapid Rhino balloon is used, these are typically removed after 3-5 days.

### **After Your Visit Care Instructions**

1. Do not blow your nose for 7 days. Blow nose gently after that.
2. Sneeze with your mouth open.
3. Use a humidifier at night.
4. Use Afrin nasal gel or ocean nasal spray (2 sprays) to each nose at 10x daily. Both are over the counter (OTC)
5. Do not take additional aspirin, or NSAIDs (ibuprofen, Aleve, Motrin).

### **How can you care for yourself at home?**

If you get another nosebleed:

1. Sit up and tilt your head slightly forward to keep blood from going down your throat.
2. Use 2 sprays of Afrin into each nostril
3. Use your thumb and index finger to pinch the soft part of your nose shut for 10 minutes - Use a clock. Do not peek before the 10 minutes are up. If the bleeding has not stopped, pinch your nose shut for another 10 minutes.
4. Try not to blow your nose for 3-7 days to keep it from bleeding again. Wipe gently

How can I avoid nosebleeds in the future?

- Avoid trauma (finger or other) to the nose
- Keep your blood pressure under control
- If you are on blood thinners, monitor your levels regularly

If the nosebleed does not stop after these techniques, go to the ER or call your physician.

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