

# Nosebleed

Nosebleeds aren't usually a sign of anything serious. They're common, particularly in children, and most can be easily treated at home.



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## See a GP if:

- a child under 2 years old has a nosebleed
- you have regular nosebleeds
- you have symptoms of anaemia – such as a faster heartbeat (palpitations), shortness of breath and pale skin
- you're taking a blood-thinning medicine, such as Warfarin
- you have a condition that means your blood can't clot properly, such as haemophilia

Your GP might want to test you for haemophilia or for other conditions such as anaemia

## See a GP now or got A&E if

- your nosebleed lasts longer than 10 to 15 minutes
- the bleeding seems excessive
- you're swallowing a large amount of blood that makes you vomit
- the bleeding started after a blow to your head
- you're feeling weak or dizzy
- you're having difficulty breathing

## Causes of a nosebleed

The inside of the nose is delicate and nosebleeds happen when it's damaged. This can be caused by:

- picking your nose
- blowing your nose too hard
- the inside of your nose being too dry (because of a change in air temperature)

Nosebleeds that need medical attention can come from deeper inside the nose and usually affect adults. They can be caused by:

- an injury or broken nose
- high blood pressure
- conditions that affect the blood vessels or how the blood clots
- certain medicines, like Warfarin



Sometimes the cause of a nosebleed is unknown. Certain people are more prone to getting nosebleeds, including:

- children (they usually grow out of them by 11)
- elderly people
- pregnant women

**How to stop a nosebleed yourself.** You should:

- sit or stand upright (don't lie down)
- pinch your nose just above your nostrils for 10 to 15 minutes
- lean forward and breathe through your mouth
- place an icepack (or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel) at the top of your nose

### **Hospital treatment**

If doctors can see where the blood is coming from they may seal it by pressing a stick with a chemical on it to stop the bleeding. If this isn't possible, doctors might pack your nose with sponges to stop the bleeding. You may need to stay in hospital for a day or two.

### **When a nosebleed stops**

After a nosebleed, for 24 hours try not to:

- blow your nose
- pick your nose
- drink hot drinks or alcohol
- do any heavy lifting or strenuous exercise
- pick any scabs

**If you need further advice then you can telephone 111**

For more information visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/nosebleed/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nosebleed/)

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