
PATIENT INFORMATION – NOSE INJURY / SUSPECTED BROKEN NOSE / NOSE BLEED

Your nose is still swollen at the moment so it might look worse than it really is.

We may not have x-rayed your nose as:

- It is difficult to assess whether any further treatment is needed whilst the nose is swollen
- Often noses need no treatment once the swelling goes down.

What you should do

- Do use ice packs (frozen peas in a damp towel is sufficient) for 10 minutes, 3 or 4 times a day
- Do take tablets such as paracetamol* to relieve the pain
- If there is swelling prop your head up in bed by sleeping on a few pillows

What you should not do

- Don't blow your nose as it may start to bleed, just wipe it carefully
- Don't attempt to straighten the nose yourself if it looks out of shape
- Don't wear glasses until the swelling has gone down

Nosebleeds

Nosebleeds are quite common but can be frightening. Nose bleeds most of the time, can be treated at home. You may need to seek advice from your GP if you get heavy or frequent nosebleeds. Nosebleeds should last no longer than 10 minutes.

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Nosebleeds can be caused by minor injuries to the nose which causes the tiny blood vessels in your nose to bleed.

If your nose starts to bleed, you should:

- sit down and firmly pinch the soft part of your nasal cavity, just above your nostrils, for 10 minutes
- lean forward and breathe through your mouth; this will drain blood down your nose instead of down the back of your throat
- stay upright, rather than lying down as this reduces the blood pressure in the veins of your nose and will discourage further bleeding
- maintain the pressure on your nose for up to 20 minutes (time this on the clock) so that the blood clots
- place a covered ice pack on the bridge of your nose
- avoid blowing your nose, bending down and strenuous activity for at least 12 hours after a nosebleed; try to keep your head above the level of your heart during this time

If your nose is still bleeding after 20 minutes, you should return to your nearest Accident and Emergency Department. You may need to have your nose packed to stop the blood flow.

What to do when the swelling has gone down

After about 5 to 7 days after your injury the swelling should have gone down.

Contact the Accident and Emergency Department if:

- Your nose is not its usual shape
- You have any problems in breathing through your nostrils.

***Pain relief advice**

You may have been given some pain relief by the health professionals in the Accident and Emergency Department. If this runs out and you need further pain relief, you can speak to a pharmacist for advice. Some common painkillers are available to buy over the counter, for e.g.

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paracetamol or ibuprofen. Always follow the instructions on the packet if you are taking these, and seek further advice from the pharmacist should you have any concerns, particularly if it is for a child.



If you become unwell or are injured, choose the right NHS service to make sure you get the best treatment. The Choose Well campaign explains what each NHS service does, and when it should be used.

Choosing well means that you and your family will get the best treatment. It also allows busy NHS services to help the people who need them most.

If you are unsure about which option to choose, please call NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 or visit the Choose Well website at www.choosewellwales.org.uk

This information has been produced based on previous information leaflets and the evidence available at the time of publication. It has been clinically reviewed however if you notice anything that needs updating or amending please contact ppi.team@wales.nhs.uk

If you require this information in another language or format please ask a member of staff.

For further advice or information contact NHS Direct Wales 0845 46 47
www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk