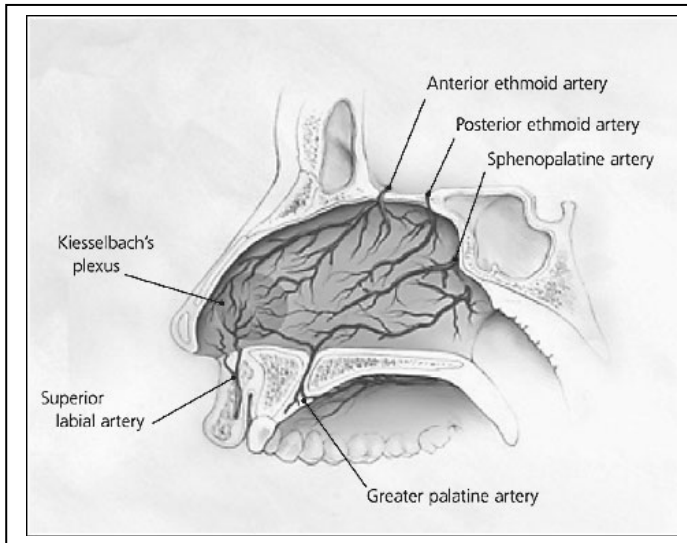


# Epistaxis (Nosebleed)



Nosebleeds most commonly caused by drying or damage to the nasal lining due to dry climate, air conditioning and nose picking. Bleeding may be prolonged by medications that block normal blood clotting (eg aspirin, warfarin, clopidogrel, anti-inflammatories). 95% of all nose bleeds occur on the front of the nasal septum where the lining is very thin and the nose has a rich blood supply. The septum is the

middle part of the nose that divides the nose into two sides.

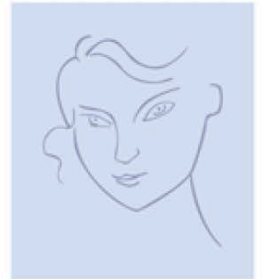
Most nosebleeds can therefore be controlled by pinching the nostrils (soft part of the nose) gently and continuously, for at least twenty minutes. The reason for this long continuous pressure is that you must hold it long enough for the blood to clot. If during that twenty minute time period, pressure is released, the process must be started over again. With medications such as aspirin and warfarin, blood clotting takes even longer.

If nosebleeds are severe, packing may be required to give the body more time to form a blood clot and heal the dry, cracked nasal lining. When your nose has a pack, antibiotics are required.

If nosebleeds are very frequent, antibiotic ointment may be used to clear up any infection at the front of the nose. If this is ineffective, *cautery* (chemical burning) may be applied to thicken the lining of the nose and shrink blood vessels. Although blood vessels shrink immediately, thickening of the lining takes approximately 1 week so you may experience a few minor bleeds in this time that usually stop with pressure. Occasionally, a general anesthetic is required for deeper cautery (especially in children who do not tolerate treatment in the office).

## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If your nose was packed, try to maintain the pack inside. If the pack starts to fall out, gently replace or cut the end off. Take antibiotics as directed when packed.
- Avoid blowing your nose for 24 hours after treatment. This could dislodge the pack or clot and start bleeding again.
- If the bleeding starts again, sit up and bending forward, gently pinch the front half of your nose continuously for twenty minutes.
- Moisten the lining of your nose twice a day with vaseline or Lansinoh using your little finger tip as an applicator. Do this more frequently during dry weather. This will keep the nose moist and allow it to heal.
- Maintain humidity in your home by using less air conditioning or using a humidifier.
- For several days after a nosebleed elevate your head when sleeping.
- Do not use aspirin or medications which make bleeding more likely. Your GP can give you recommendations about aspirin or warfarin use



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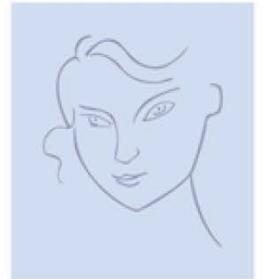
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- Resume normal activities as able but try to avoid straining, lifting, bending at the waist or spicy food for several days.
- Return to Dr Iseli if you are still having nosebleeds.

**SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF:**

- Bleeding recurs and cannot be controlled.
- There is unusual bleeding from or bruising on other parts of the body.
- You have a temperature above 38.5 when there is a nasal pack in place.
- You become light headed, feel faint, become sweaty, or vomit blood.



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