Epistaxis (Nosebleed)

Nosebleeds can be caused by many conditions including trauma, infections, polyps, foreign bodies, dry mucous membranes or climate, medications and air conditioning. Most nosebleeds occur in the front of the nose. It is because of this location that most nosebleeds can be controlled by pinching the nostrils gently and continuously. Do this for at least 10 to 20 minutes. The reason for this long continuous pressure is that you must hold it long enough for the blood to clot. If during that 10 to 20 minute time period, pressure is released, the process may have to be started again. The nosebleed may stop by itself, quit with pressure, need concentrated heating (*cautery*) or stop with pressure from packing.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If your nose was packed, try to maintain the pack inside until your caregiver removes it. If a gauze pack was used and it starts to fall out, gently replace or cut the end off. Do NOT cut if a balloon catheter was used to pack the nose. Otherwise, do not remove unless instructed.
- Avoid blowing your nose for 12 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 20 minutes.
- If bleeding was caused by dry mucous membranes, cover the inside of your nose every morning with a petroleum or antibiotic ointment. Use your little fingertip as an applicator. Do this as needed during dry weather. This will keep the mucous membranes moist and allow them to heal.
- Maintain humidity in your home by using less air conditioning or using a humidifier.
- **Do not** use aspirin or medications which make bleeding more likely. Your caregiver can give you recommendations on this.
- Resume normal activities as able but try to avoid straining, lifting or bending at the waist for several days.
- If the nosebleeds become recurrent and the cause is unknown, your caregiver may suggest laboratory tests.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Bleeding recurs and cannot be controlled.
- There is unusual bleeding from or bruising on other parts of the body.
- You have an oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C), not controlled with medication.
- Nosebleeds continue.
- There is any worsening of the condition which originally brought you in.
- You become light headed, feel faint, become sweaty or vomit blood.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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