

Caring for Your Child
Discharge Instructions: Nasal Cautery

About Nosebleeds (Epistaxis)

Epistaxis is more commonly known as a nosebleed. The nose may bleed when the membrane (the lining of the inside of the nose) is irritated. This can happen for many reasons: picking or rubbing the nose, dryness of the membranes due to a cold, or a foreign object inside the nostril. If your child gets nosebleeds often, or the nosebleeds last a long time, we may suggest doing nasal cautery to prevent future nosebleeds.

How to stop a nosebleed

- Stay calm. Comfort your child.
- Lean your child slightly forward. Leaning back can cause the blood to go down the throat, and can cause choking in younger children.
- Pinch or squeeze the nostrils closed for 10 minutes. This should stop the bleeding.

About Nasal Cautery

Nasal Cautery is an operation done under general anesthesia. The surgeon will use an instrument that will either pass electricity or apply a chemical to burn the area of the nosebleeds. This will cause the area to scab and scar. This allows the healing membranes to thicken which prevents further nosebleeds.

What to expect after the operation

- Apply antibiotic ointment, nasal saline gel, or Vaseline to the inside of the nose to keep it moist. This area is still healing, so be gentle.
- Do not allow your child to blow, rub or pick the nose.
- Do not give your child medicine that contains Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or Aspirin. These can cause blood thinning and more nosebleeds.

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- You may give Tylenol as needed for discomfort. Follow the directions on the label.
- Your doctor may prescribe antibiotics to prevent an infection. Follow the directions your doctor gives you, and be sure to finish all of the medication.

Activity

- Your child may return to normal activity and diet after the operation.
- Your child may return to school or daycare the day after the procedure.

When to call the Doctor

- If the nosebleeds continue or recur
- Your child has any difficulty breathing or swallowing
- Your child has a temperature greater than 101.3°F or 38.5°C taken under the arm; greater than 102.2°F or 39°C by mouth or by rectum.
- You have any other questions or concerns call your ENT surgeon at 215 590-3440. Evenings after 5pm and weekends, call 215 590-1000 and ask the operator to page the ENT resident.

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