

# Care after an injury to your nose

Emergency Department

Information for Patients

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## Introduction

You have an injury to your nose and been seen by a doctor/ emergency nurse practitioner (ENP). Please read this leaflet carefully and follow the instructions below.

## What can I expect after an injury to my nose?

Injuries to the nose can cause a lot of swelling. This should go down over 5 to 10 days.

Do not be worried if you develop black eyes or bruising extends down your face as this is common after a nose injury.

## Will I need an X-ray?

Injury can cause a broken nose (also known as a nasal fracture) which is a break or crack in the bones in your nose. Where it is only your nose that has been injured an X-ray is not usually needed as a broken nose can be diagnosed by a visual and physical examination.

## How do I care for my injury?

Your nose will feel blocked for the next 48 hours but try not to blow your nose.

Applying ice packs to the swollen area can help ease the swelling. Do this for 5 minutes at a time. Make sure ice does not come into direct contact with your skin or eyeballs.

If you experience any pain, take painkillers (usually paracetamol) as advised by the doctor/ ENP.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

We cannot guarantee that your nose will not bleed again, however the following steps may help:

- Avoid lifting, strenuous exercise, constipation and stressful situations as they can cause your blood pressure to rise and increase the chances of a nosebleed.
- Do not blow, pick or attempt to clean the inside of your nose. The crusting discomfort you may feel is part of the healing process. If you remove the crusts you may infect the area or cause another nosebleed.
- Try to avoid sneezing, but if necessary, sneeze with your mouth open. This is not easy but will stop sudden pressure within your nose.
- You may have dark red or brown discharge from your nose. This is usual and is nature's way of clearing the nose.

## **What do I do if my nose bleeds again at home?**

Try to keep as calm as possible and follow the steps below:

- Sit upright with your head tipped forward over a bowl or sink.
- Spit out any blood as swallowing this may make you feel sick.
- Pinch the fleshy part of your nose (below the bridge of the nose) for 15 minutes without releasing the pressure.
- A cold compress on the back of your neck for no longer than 5 minutes at a time may help.
- If your nose is still bleeding after 30 minutes, return to the Emergency Department.

## **You should return to the Emergency Department if you develop:**

- Severe blockage in both sides of your nose.
- Severe headache with blurred or double vision.
- Eye pain and double vision.
- Neck pain or a stiff neck, with numbness or tingling in your arms.
- Other symptoms of a severe head injury such as passing out (collapsing) or if you have difficulty speaking.
- Generally feel unwell especially with pain, fever, swollen lumps in your neck and heat on or near your nose.

## Will I need a follow-up clinic appointment?

Once any swelling has gone down you may need to see an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Specialist, so an appointment will be requested for you today.

An appointment will be sent out to you in the next 7 to 10 days. If you do not receive an appointment either by text or in the post then please call the Referrals Management Team on **0116 258 5242** during office hours (8am to 4.30pm). You will need to tell them that you need an appointment for the Nasal Trauma Clinic.

You should be seen within 3 weeks of your injury, after the swelling has gone down and the surgeon can see what your nose is really like after your injury. If any further treatment is needed they will talk to you about this in the clinic.

**Not all broken noses need straightening, but if it does, most can be straightened in clinic under a local anaesthetic during your outpatient appointment.**

If you have any questions, write them down here to remind you what to ask when you speak to your nurse/ doctor/ consultant:

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