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EPISTAXIS (NOSE BLEED) PRECAUTIONS

Nosebleeds are very common, and the vast majority will respond to simple measures to reduce the chances of repeated bleeding. It is important to avoid certain behaviors while recovering from a nosebleed. We recommend the following to our patients:

1. Avoid taking aspirin or any aspirin-containing products. You should also avoid taking other anti-inflammatory medications, such as Motrin, Advil and Ecotrin. Read labels carefully on over-the-counter preparations. Many of them, such as Alka Seltzer Plus, contain aspirin, but do not have the word aspirin in the product name. If you have been advised by your cardiologist, internist or other physician to take aspirin daily, please check with that doctor before discontinuing the aspirin.
2. Avoid straining or heavy lifting
3. Avoid hot liquids and extremely hot food. Hot showers and sitting in saunas or hot tubs should also be avoided. Consumption of alcoholic beverages should also be avoided.
4. Avoid blowing your nose forcefully. If possible, do not blow your nose at all. If you have to sneeze, sneeze with your mouth open.
5. Avoid traumatizing your nose by picking at scabs or crusts that form as the bleeding area heals. The best way to get these scabs to disappear is to apply a bland ointment to the inside of the nose on a regular basis. An antibiotic ointment, such as Polysporin, Neosporin, or Bacitracin is often effective. A large blob of the ointment should be pressed gently into the nostril at bedtime. The ointment will melt and coat the inside of the nose during the night. This can also be repeated during the daytime. The ointment will soften the scab and allow it to float away without tearing the underlying tissue.
6. At all times, try to keep your head elevated, even when asleep. Do not bend over with your head below the level of your heart since this will increase pressure in the blood vessels in the nose and cause bleeding.
7. Should your nose begin to bleed, pinch the nose tightly from both sides, grasping the nose between your thumb and first finger and apply pressure for at least ten minutes constantly by the clock. Put your head forward slightly to keep blood from running into your throat. If the bleeding continues to reoccur or pressure does not control the bleeding at all, then you should call our office for further instructions.