

# Nose Injury

## What is a nose injury?

When a nose is hit, it often becomes bloody, bruised, and swollen. In most cases it is not broken. Even when it is broken, x-rays are not helpful. It's best to wait 5 days, when the swelling is gone. If the nose looks crooked or different than it used to, you will probably need to see an ear-nose-throat surgeon. For mild breaks of the nose, it works best to correct the break a few days after the injury. Severe breaks of the nose are often fixed the same day in the operating room.

## How can I take care of my child?

- **Bruises or swelling.** Apply ice to the area for 20 minutes. One hour later apply ice again for 20 minutes. Give acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) as necessary for pain. Do not give aspirin.
- **Cuts or scrapes.** Scrub the area with soap and water for 5 minutes. Then apply pressure for 10 minutes with a very clean cloth (or sterile gauze if you have it) to stop bleeding from the cut or scrape. If the scrape is large, apply an antibiotic ointment and cover the scrape with a Band-Aid for 1 day.
- **Nosebleed.** To stop a nosebleed, squeeze the soft parts of the nose against the center wall for 10 minutes.

## Call your child's doctor right away if:

- You are sure the nose is broken or crooked.
- The skin is split open and may need stitches.
- A nosebleed won't stop after 10 minutes of direct pressure.
- Your child can't breathe through the nose.

## Call your child's doctor during office hours if:

- The shape of the nose has not returned to normal after 5 days.
- A yellow discharge, increasing soreness, fever, or other signs of infection occur.
- You have other concerns or questions.

Written by B.D. Schmitt, M.D., author of "Your Child's Health," Bantam Books.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.