

Caring for an injured or broken nose

Emergency department Patient information

Injuries to the nose can cause a lot of swelling, which usually settles down in about a week. There may be a fracture (break) underneath. There is no need for an x-ray at the time, as this will not help with the diagnosis. It is common for the swelling and bruising to spread underneath your eyes.

You will need to see the ear, nose and throat (ENT) team if, once the swelling has gone down, your nose does not look like it did previously.

Five days after your injury, please take two photographs of your nose using your phone. One should be from the front and the second holding the camera above your nose (on your forehead looking down at your nose). You may need someone else to help you do this. Please email these two photos to ent@uhd.nhs.uk together with your name and date of birth. This will help the specialist team decide if they need to see you and how quickly.

Caring for your nose at home

Do not:

- blow your nose
- rub or pick your nose
- wear glasses that rub if the swelling is too much

Do:

- hold an ice pack (or frozen peas in a tea towel) to your nose for 15 mins every couple of hours for the first couple of days. This will help to reduce the swelling and may also help with pain
- try to prop your head up in bed to reduce swelling
- take painkillers if it is sore

If your nose starts to bleed:

- sit down and lean forward - DO NOT tilt your head backwards as blood can run back down your throat
- breathe through your mouth
- pinch your nose using your finger and thumb on the soft part below the bridge of your nose. Do not let go for 15 minutes then release and check for bleeding after this time. If there is persistent bleeding, repeat this process. If after 30 minutes your nose is still bleeding despite pressure, come back to the Emergency Department.

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