Emergency Department

Nasal Packing following Nosebleed

Nosebleeds occur when the delicate blood vessels in the nasal lining become damaged or irritated. Triggers can include trauma, dry air, allergies, irritants, infections, certain medications and some underlying medical conditions. Nasal packing for epistaxis (nosebleeds) is a common procedure used to stop bleeding from the nose. It is typically done when other methods such as applying pressure have failed to control the bleeding.

There are several different types of packing used at Dorset County Hospital. The following are the main ones used:

- **Rapid Rhino nasal tampon**: The rapid rhino is an inflatable nasal tampon used for controlling nose bleeds. It applies pressure to the bleeding site and absorbs blood to stop bleeding quickly.
- **Merocel packing**: Merocel packing is made of soft expandable material. It provides effective pressure on the bleeding site and absorbs blood.
- **Bioabsorbable nasal packing**: Bioabsorbable nasal packing is made from materials that gradually dissolve or are absorbed by the body. It provides temporary support to nasal tissues during healing after surgery or light nosebleeds, eliminating the need for removal procedures.

Going home with a nasal pack

It is likely that the bleeding will stop with packing in place, and you will be discharged home with the pack still in place. You will require a follow up appointment in our ENT outpatient's department, usually within 24 hours. If you have not been given an appointment, please check with the clinician treating you.

Things that will help:

- You may find it helpful to take simple over the counter painkillers such as paracetamol.
- Use any medications you have been prescribed, including nasal sprays, to keep your nose moist and promote healing.
- Do not try to remove or move your nasal packing.
- Avoid any strenuous activity, bending or heavy lifting (10lbs+) for the first 48 hours.
- Avoid breathing in tobacco smoke or chemical irritants such as cleaning products.
- Avoid blowing your nose and sneeze with your mouth open.
- If you take medication to thin the blood, you may be asked to stop taking certain medications for a short period of time - please check with your clinician if this applies to you.

When to seek medical help

If you experience any of the following, go directly to the Emergency Department:

- A fever.
- Coughing up any blood from the back of your throat.
- Any vomiting.
- You feel dizzy or weak.
- Your pain level increases.
- Your packing becomes dislodged or falls out.
- You restart bleeding and are unable to stop it within 15 minutes of pressure.

What happens next?

You will be given an appointment to have your nasal packing removed in our ENT outpatient's department.

Packing removal is a relatively straightforward procedure. A healthcare provider will gently remove the nasal packing material from your nose, which may cause mild discomfort or pressure, but this will be very brief. You may experience relief from nasal congestion or bleeding after the packing is removed.

You may require a short procedure such as nasal cautery or be given topical antibiotic cream. Your health care provider may provide additional instructions for nasal care and book further follow up as required. If you have any concerns or questions before or after the procedure, do not hesitate to discuss this with your healthcare provider.

Contact Numbers:

We hope that you have found this information useful. If you have any questions or have any problems attending your follow up appointment, please contact the Outpatient's Department on 01305 254299.

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk

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