

Bleeding nose is quite common among children

Bleeding nose is a common occurrence among children, especially during dry weather. It usually occurs in the front part of the nose between the nostrils where fragile small blood vessels are located. In winter, discharge from the nose tends to dry. Picking the dried mucous can cause bleeding.

Allergic rhinitis is more likely to cause the nose to bleed. When such bleeding occurs, the child should tilt his or her head forward instead of upwards to face the sky. Squeeze the soft part of the nose firmly with the thumb and index finger for 1 to 2 minutes. The action can be repeated if the bleeding does not stop. Usually it stops within 5 to 10 minutes.

A wet q-tip can be used to clear the dried blood gently afterwards. To avoid recurrence, children should be prevented from picking their noses. Frequent and persistent nose bleeding may suggest systemic bleeding disorders, one of which is known as von Willebrand, an inherited bleeding disorder that can be mild, but patients require preventive treatment followed by surgery.

Another disorder is known as idiopathic thrombocytopenia purpura, which is an acquired condition associated with easy bruising due to low platelet count (low amount of blood clotting cells). Platelet is important in controlling the early stages of bleeding. Fortunately, most children overcome such bleeding naturally within 6 months.

Parents need not worry if their children only have occasional bleeding noses. However, if bleeding occurs frequently such as once or twice a week; or if it is associated with the face developing an unhealthy pale look; or easy bruising or fever, the child should see a doctor.