

Broken Nose (nasal fracture) Emergency Department leaflet

Information for patients attending emergency department with a broken nose.

Broken nose overview

A broken nose is a very common injury, especially after a fall, fight, or sports injury. The bones in the nose are the most commonly broken facial bones because they stick out and do not have a lot of support.

The broken nose usually heals on its own within three weeks.

We do not usually do x-rays to check whether you have broken your nose. If you do need an x-ray this will be to check that you have not damaged other parts of your face, such as your eye sockets, cheek bones or jaw bones.

Treatment for your nose injury

A member of staff will examine your nose to make sure there is no bleeding, no blood clots (septal haematoma) in your septum and that you can breathe through both nostrils.

If you have a simple break with no problems we may:

- Advise you to use ice packs and to take painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen to reduce the swelling and ease the pain.
- Give you a course of antibiotics if you have a cut over the area of the break or had a blood clot lanced and drained.
- You will be asked to read this leaflet carefully and assess your own nose at home after 5 days.

When you go home- check your nose on day 5 after the injury.

Broken nose usually heals on its own within 3 weeks from the injury. Occasionally if the nasal bones are misaligned an Ear Nose and Throat doctor might need to try to realign the bones in the clinic to help to improve the appearance of your nose or help with the breathing. **This can only be done within first 2 weeks after the injury.**

Please book ENT review appointment by calling 01463 705361 if:

- Your nose is obviously misshaped/deviated and out of place, and you would like it to be corrected.
- You have swelling inside your nose that is not resolving/getting worse.
- You have a blocked nose that is not improving.

Do not:

- Try to straighten your nose yourself if it's changed shape.
- Pick or blow your nose until it's healed.
- Do strenuous exercise for the first two weeks.
- Play sports where your face might be hit for at least six weeks.

Further support

- For general medical advice please use NHS website, the NHS 111 service or your GP.
- This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in NHS Highland