

# **Suspected Broken Nose**

**Emergency Department**  
Patient Information Leaflet

## How common is a broken nose?

It is extremely common, nasal fractures account for:

- 1 in 3 of all bodily fractures
- 4 in 10 of all facial fractures

Often these figures are underestimated as many people fail to seek treatment.

## What causes a broken nose?

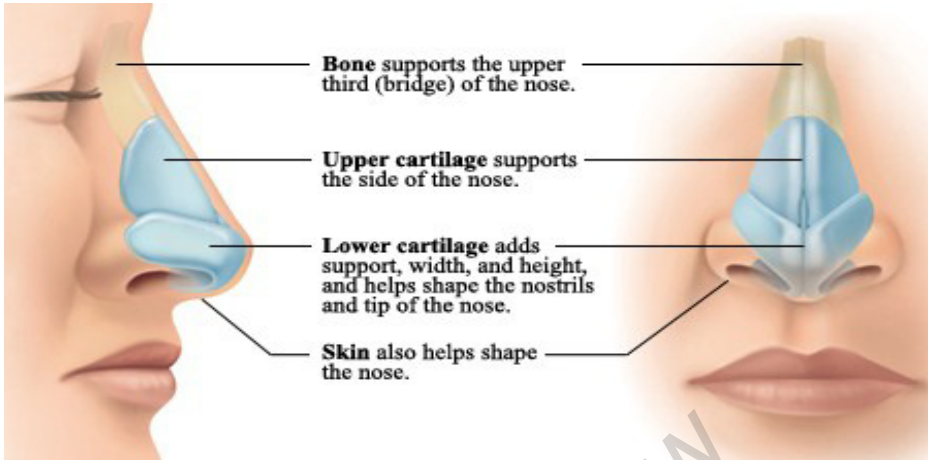
The nose itself is naturally vulnerable to injury due to its outward projection and location in the centre of the face.

When serious fractures do occur, they are often due to a blunt, forceful collision. This is most common in:

- contact sports (e.g. rugby)
- driving accidents
- violent assaults

Therefore, people who fall into any of the above categories are automatically at increased risk of injury.

# The nose



The nose is formed of both bone (the hard upper third bridge) and cartilage (the soft lower part).

The main reason to seek help if suspecting injury is to identify whether:

- the fracture is simple and limited to the nasal bones (often no intervention needed)
- the fracture involves other facial bones or nasal septum (the inside part separating the nostrils). This may need further medical or surgical treatment

# Which symptoms may indicate fracture?

## Minor symptoms: no immediate medical advice needed

- pain and swelling
- nose bleed
- bruising around the eyes
- difficulty breathing through nose
- misshapen appearance (often more obvious when swelling has resolved)

### First Aid (at home)

- ✓ Try to remain calm
- ✓ Breathe through the mouth and lean forward to keep blood from going down the back of the throat
- ✓ Gently pinch nose to stem bleeding and apply cold compresses to reduce swelling
- ✓ Take pain killers like Paracetamol (consult GP).

Swelling usually resolves within three to five days. At this point it is important to contact your local GP or walk-in centre for follow-up care.

## Major symptoms: visit the nearest A&E department urgently if

- the bleeding doesn't stop
- you have a headache/affected vision
- clear fluid keeps draining from your nose
- you suspect a blood clot in the septum (a cherry-red, shiny lump inside the nostrils)
- you have suffered additional injuries (pain, bleeding, bruising, swelling, cuts) to your head and neck

## What happens in hospital?

You may or may not need an X-ray or CT scan to assess the bones of your face; especially if complicated injury is suspected.

**Minor injury:** at your ENT appointment, you will be advised about things to do at home e.g. pain relief.

**Suspected deformity:** may need manual realignment within 14 days (you may be lightly sedated) and sometimes surgery (you may be put to sleep for the procedure).

**Serious injury:** surgery may be necessary to correct any significant deformity, drain excess blood/fluid from the nose and correct any other head and neck fractures.

## What are the risks of not seeking medical help?

- Damage to the cartilage (see diagram) can cause a blood clot inside the nose which leads to permanent blockage if not drained
- It may also lead to an abscess (a pocket of infection)
- This can compromise blood supply to the nose and result in irreversible collapse of the nasal bridge (see diagram on page 3)

**For advice if you are concerned, call NHS Direct 0845 4647 [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)**

**If you are worried that a person you know may be a victim of abuse, you can talk to your doctor.**

**If you are a victim of abuse yourself, you can call the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247**

Under review

**Please use this space for any notes you may wish to make**

Under review

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 0730510

ਜੇਕਰ ਇਹ ਲੀਫਲੈੱਟ (ਛੋਟਾ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ) ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ) ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ਟ ਇੰਨਫਰਮੇਸ਼ਨ ਕੋ-ਆਰਡੀਨੇਟਰ ਨਾਲ **0800 0730510** ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

यदि आपको यह दस्तावेज़ अपनी भाषा में चाहिए तो पेशेंट इनफरमेशन को-आरडीनेटर को टैलीਫ਼ोन ਨੰਬਰ **0800 0730510** पर फ़ोन करें।

જો તમને આ પત્રિકા તમારી પોતાની ભાષા (ગુજરાતી)માં જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને પેશન્ટ ઈન્ફોર્મેશન કો-ઓર્ડિનેટરનો **0800 0730510** પર સંપર્ક કરો.

आपनि यदि এই প্রচারপত্রটি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে পেশেন্ট ইনফরমেশন কো-অর্ডিনেটরের সাথে **0800 0730510** এই নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

إذا كنت ترغب هذه الوريقة مترجمة بلغتك الاصلية ( اللغة العربية ) , فرجاءا اتصل بمنسق المعلومات للمريض

**0800 0730510** على التلّفون Information Co-ordinator

مب ضرورت اس ليڤلٲ کو اپنی زبان (اردو) میں حاصل کرنے کے لیے روبرو اپنی ٹیلیفون نمبر **0800 0730510** پر وقت انٹرنیشنل اور داخلہ (مریضوں کے لئے معلومات کی فراہمی کے سلسلے میں) کے ساتھ رابطہ کریں۔

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