

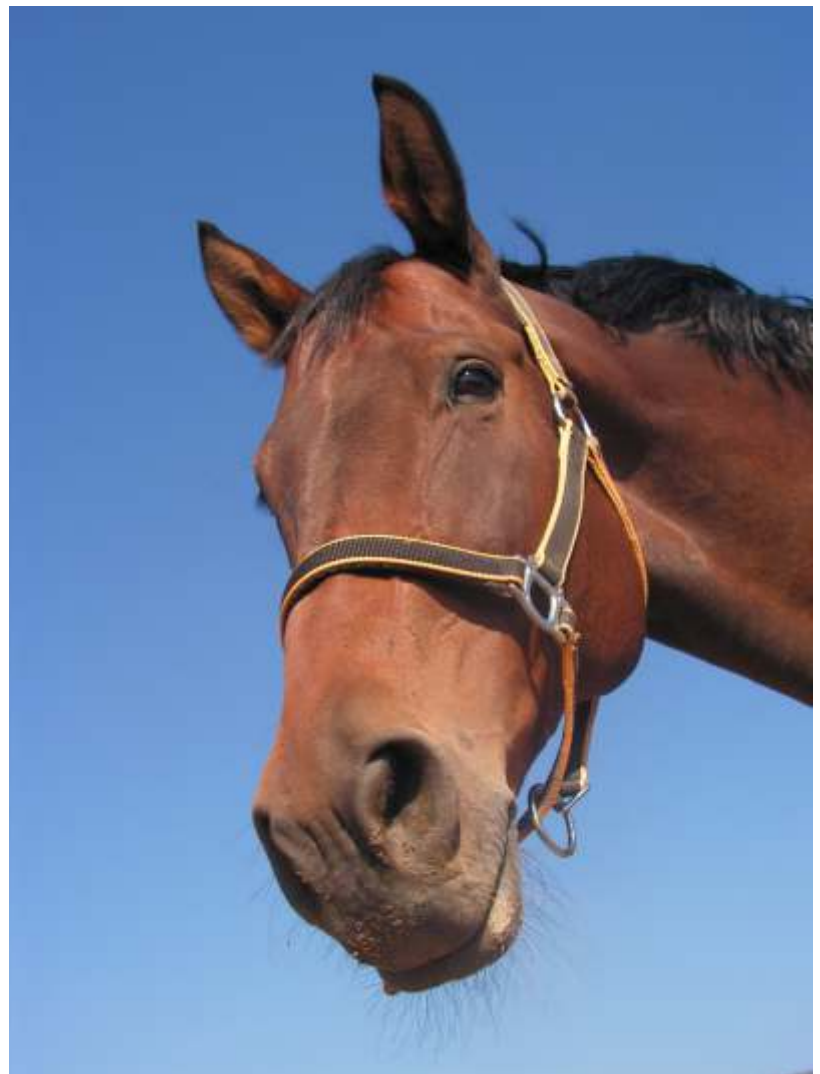
My Horse has a Nose Bleed

Horses can develop nose bleeds for many reasons, some are minor and some are going to require prompt attention. Most nose bleeds occur from a bump to the head or nose and are minor. Knowing some of the signs of the more serious causes for nose bleeds will help you identify a problem early before there are serious consequences.

Causes of a Nose Bleed

A nose bleed occurs when there is a disruption of blood vessels somewhere in the respiratory tract. This includes the upper airway as you would expect but also the sinuses and the lungs.

The most common reason for a small amount of blood in the nostrils is a minor trauma or bump to the nose. These types of nose bleeds are often missed and if noticed, they resolve within minutes with only a small trickle of blood present. If the nose bleed recurs on a frequent basis or there is profuse bleeding from the nostrils (either one side or both sides), then you need to seek veterinary medical attention.



In the upper respiratory tract, which includes the inside of the nose back to the larynx as well as the sinuses and guttural pouches, the cause for recurrent or significant bleeding can be due to a fungus infection that wears away at the wall of the internal carotid artery in the guttural pouch, fungal infections within the sinuses or in the labyrinth of tissue in the nose, a benign tumor, known as a ethmoid hematoma, which forms at the back of the pharynx or in the sinuses, severe trauma to the head (flipping over backwards and hitting the skull) or any cancerous tumors of the upper airways.

Abscesses in the guttural pouches or sinuses can also result in bleeding but usually with some yellow discharge as well. Fungal infection of the internal carotid artery is a life threatening condition and usually result in profuse bright red bleeding from one or both nostrils. Ethmoid hematoma's usually result in recurrent nose bleeds with red-brown blood discharge and often only from one nostril. Similarly, sinus related bleeding usually occurs only from one nostril on the affected side.



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Lower respiratory tract bleeding occurs from exercise induced pulmonary hemorrhage or the break down of the blood vessels in the lungs due to over exertion during exercise. This type of bleeding will occur following exercise. Often occurring about 5-20 minutes after the exercise. If you suspect this may be the cause of bleeding, then your veterinarian should be summoned to investigate further as well.

There are many causes for a nose bleed, some are minor and others require a visit from your vet.

If in doubt, call your vet for help.