# Parents' knowledge regarding first-aid management of epistaxis in children in Taif, Saudi Arabia

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Objectives:** Epistaxis among children is considered a scary issue for both the child and the parents. In Saudi Arabia, one third of children suffer from epistaxis. In our study, we aimed to assess the level of knowledge among parents regarding first-aid management of epistaxis in Taif city, Saudi Arabia. **Method:** We carried out a descriptive cross-sectional study among parents who visited Alhada Armed Forces Hospital and Prince Mansour Military Hospital between May 2022 and July 2022 in Taif, Saudi Arabia. A questionnaire with 17 questions was distributed among the participants. We excluded parents with children who were older than 18 years. **Results:** A total of 502 parents were included in the study. About two thirds (67.5%) of parents had a moderate level of knowledge and around one third (30.9%) showed a good level of knowledge regarding epistaxis first aid. Furthermore, higher knowledge scores were found among parents who had epistaxis previously (P = 0.026), who attended a course on first aid (P = 0.002), and who were aged more than 35 years (P = 0.017). **Conclusion:** Our study demonstrated that most Saudi parents had a moderate level of knowledge regarding first-aid management of epistaxis. Additionally, several factors, such as the number of children, age, those attending first-aid courses, and experience treating others with epistaxis, were associated with the level of knowledge among parents. Further larger studies are required among Saudi parents to examine the knowledge, practice, and related factors regarding first-aid management of epistaxis.

Keywords: Children, epistaxis, first-aid management, Saudi Arabia

### Introduction

Epistaxis is one of the most common emergencies that present as acute bleeding in the ear, nose, and throat. Nasal bleeding is the most prevalent epistaxis case and is mainly caused by the rupture of blood vessels in the nasal mucosa.<sup>[1]</sup>

The nose mainly receives blood supply from two main arteries: the external carotid artery and the internal carotid artery. [2] Nasal

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bleeding is classified as anterior and posterior based on the incidence site.<sup>[3]</sup> The anterior type is more common in young adults and children, while the posterior type is common in the elderly and arises from nasal cavity bleeding.<sup>[4]</sup> The Kiesselbach plexus or Little's area is the most common anatomical site of epistaxis.<sup>[5]</sup> Several factors can cause nasal bleeding, including local, systemic, and environmental factors. The local factors include nasal allergies, upper airway infections, bodies in the nasal cavity, septal perforation, and trauma, while the systemic factors include arterial high blood pressure, blood disorders, coagulopathy, and anticoagulant use.<sup>[6]</sup>

It was reported that approximately 10%–12% of individuals are affected by epistaxis, and 10% are severe cases that require special

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medical care.<sup>[7]</sup> A cross-sectional study in Saudi Arabia showed that 27% of the study subjects experienced nasal bleeding.<sup>[8]</sup> Most people affected by epistaxis were children, young adults, and the elderly, and is not common in neonates.<sup>[9]</sup> A previous survey in Saudi Arabia showed that about 35.5% of children have suffered from epistaxis.<sup>[10]</sup> Recurrent nasal bleeding in children is considered a troublesome and alarming issue for parents and children.<sup>[11]</sup>

Epistaxis mainly does not cause complications. Furthermore, if they occur, they will be severe. Complications caused by epistaxis include septal hematoma, external nasal deformity, balloon migration, hemorrhagic shock, and mucosal pressure necrosis.<sup>[12]</sup> Immediate provision of first aid to patients can make a significant difference to the outcome as it may reduce the course and complications of injuries.<sup>[13]</sup>

Parents are always in direct contact with their children, and the most challenging obligation is to provide a safe environment to reduce or prevent injury.<sup>[14]</sup> Parents' knowledge about acute epistaxis management and other methods of its prevention is essential for their children; improving it will decrease pain and eliminate the deterioration of the condition without hospital admission. Additionally, in severe cases, it will reduce mortality and morbidity.<sup>[1]</sup> Furthermore, good knowledge of parents towards acute epistaxis will help the primary care providers and family physicians to treat the disease appropriately through early management and limiting the complications that may occur in severe cases. Identifying the knowledge gaps and the factors that could affect the knowledge level will give the physicians the key to putting appropriate awareness programs that could increase parents' knowledge level in place.

Despite epistaxis being common among children, no studies conducted in Saudi Arabia has assessed the level of knowledge among parents regarding administering first aid during epistaxis. Thus, this study aimed to evaluate the knowledge regarding first-aid management of epistaxis among parents in Taif city, Saudi Arabia.

## **Methods**

#### Study type

This study was a cross-sectional.

### Study population

The study participants were parents with children aged younger than 18 years who visited Alhada Armed Forces Hospital and Prince Mansour Military Hospital (PMMH) during the study period.

### Study period

This study was performed from May to July 2022 at Alhada Armed Forces Hospital and (PMMH) in Taif, Saudi Arabia.

# Sample size

The sample size calculation considered a 50% population proportion, a 95% confidence interval, and a 5% margin of error, and the minimum representative sample was 385 participants.

## **Study instruments**

A validated Arabic version of the questionnaire adapted from a previous Saudi study was distributed to be filled out by parents. [15] The questionnaire consisted of two sections: The first section included demographic information, including age, gender, social status, educational level, number of children below 18 years old, and whether the participants had attended a first-aid course or ever had a nosebleed or managed a case of epistaxis before. The second section was composed of 17 questions which was a set of closed-ended questions about parents' knowledge regarding first-aid management of epistaxis for their children. For calculating participants' knowledge, each correct statement was given a score of one point. The total score for each participant was calculated by adding up the individual scores for each question. The total score of each parent was calculated out of 16 points. Afterward, the level of knowledge was categorized into three groups: ≤5 points accounted for having poor knowledge, 6-11 points for moderate knowledge, and 12-16 points for good knowledge.

### Statistical methods

After data extraction, it was revised and coded. The statistical calculations were done using the computer program IBM SPSS Statistics (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, USA) version 26 for Microsoft Windows. Data were statistically described in the median (IQR) for continuous data. Frequencies (number of cases) and valid percentages were used for categorical variables. Chi-squared or Fisher's exact test was performed for categorical variables between the subgroups. *P*- values less than 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

### **Results**

A total of 502 participants were included in the study. Of them, 39% were males and 61% females, with a mean age of  $40.64 \pm 0.393$  years. The majority of participants were married (93%), highly educated (76.1%), had 1 to 3 children (69.9%), had epistaxis (57%), had previously treated others with epistaxis (62.7%), and did not take any first-aid course (74.3%). Flyers and courses about first aid were the most common source of information about epistaxis (61.2%), followed by the care presenters and physicians (19.5%). Full details are described in Table 1.

Responses toward knowledge of epistaxis were identified in Tables 2 and 3. Exposure to hot places and hot weather exacerbates epistaxis and shows the highest rates of correct answers (82.9%), followed by changing the position of the head would stop the bleeding (77.9%). On the contrary, "sneezing is related to epistaxis" and "stop the bleeding by blocking the

Table 1:	Table 1: Characteristics of the study population				
Parameters	Category	Count (n=502)	Percentage		
Age (years)	<30	85	16.9		
	31-40	178	35.5		
	41-50	179	35.7		
	>50	60	12		
Gender	Male	196	39		
	Female	306	61		
Marital status	Single	14	2.8		
	Married	467	93		
	Divorced	13	2.6		
	Widowed	8	1.6		
Educational	Illiterate	12	2.4		
level	Moderate education	108	21.5		
	Higher education	382	76.1		
Number of	1-3	351	69.9		
children	4-6	139	27.7		
	7-10	12	2.4		
Taken any first	Yes	129	25.7		
aid course	No	373	74.3		
Having epistaxis	Yes	286	57		
	No	216	43		
Treated anyone	Yes	315	62.7		
with epistaxis	No	187	37.3		
Source of	Care presenters and physicians	98	19.5		
information	Television and newspapers	8	1.6		
	Internet and social media	75	14.9		
	Friends	5	1.0		
	Flyers and first aid courses	307	61.2		
	Teachers	9	1.8		

nose with tissue paper, cotton, or any similar object" showed the highest rate of false answers (57.8% and 47.4%, respectively).

A total of 86.1% of the participants reported that if they are having epistaxis, they would try to stop it or control it with pressure. Approximately 70.1% of the participants were unaware of the right side to apply the pressure. About half of the participants correctly answered the required duration of pressing on the area and changing the position of the head forward. Forty percent knew when to go to the emergency room (after 20 minutes). Only 13.1% knew that more than one cup was a large amount of bleeding. Full details are described in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 4 shows a moderate level of knowledge regarding epistaxis among parents (67.5%), followed by good knowledge by 30.9%.

By comparing the associated factors with the three levels of knowledge [Table 5], no statistically significant differences were found except for the number of children and parents who treated others with epistaxis. However, good knowledge was significantly higher among parents who had more than four children (P = 0.03) and who had treated others with epistaxis (P = 0.004).

By comparing the associated factors with the total score of knowledge (median [IQR] = 9.0 [3]), factors such as sex,

education, number of children, marital status, and source of information had no significant differences with the level of parents' knowledge. Meanwhile, parents who were older than 35 years (P=0.017), who had taken previous courses of first aid (P=0.002), had epistaxis (P=0.026), and who had treated others with epistaxis (P=0.001) had a higher score of knowledge about first-aid management of epistaxis [Table 6].

#### Discussion

Epistaxis, also called nosebleed, is one of the most significant medical emergency cases associated with the ear, nose, and throat that are reported in emergency departments.<sup>[16]</sup> The prevalence of epistaxis ranged from 10% to 60% of normal individuals. In addition to this, 6% of individuals with epistaxis were admitted to medical care centers to stop nasal hemorrhage.<sup>[17]</sup>

Several trials were previously conducted either about general first-aid management among parents<sup>[18,19]</sup> or about epistaxis first-aid management in other populations.<sup>[11,20–24]</sup> Consequently, this study was conducted to assess the knowledge of first-aid management regarding epistaxis among parents in Taif city, Saudi Arabia. Besides that this study was conducted to examine the factors that could affect the participants' knowledge.

Our study showed that the median (IQR) score of knowledge regarding management of epistaxis was 9 (3). By assessing the knowledge levels regarding the management of epistaxis, our results demonstrated that almost two thirds of parents showed a moderate level of knowledge regarding first-aid in epistaxis (67.5%) and around one third (30.9%) had good knowledge.

In the prior trials carried out among Saudi parents attending primary health care about their knowledge of general first aid, only 27.9% of parents correctly answered one question regarding the management of epistaxis which is by pressuring the nasal soft tissue with the head tilted down.<sup>[3]</sup> In our study, however, half of the parents provided the correct answer regarding the position of the head.

On the contrary, American parents had a highly correct response toward managing children's epistaxis (80.1%). [4] Similarly, in the present study, almost the same response (86.1%) was seen about applying pressure to stop the bleeding.

Furthermore, in the general Saudi population, the results of a study conducted in 2020 on administration of first aid during epistaxis showed that 78% of the participants had a good level of knowledge about first-aid management of epistaxis.<sup>[5]</sup> This finding could be justified as the latter study population had taken previous training on first-aid management (63%) and had witnessed or had epistaxis before (73.5%). However, in our study, only 25.7% had taken first-aid courses, and 57% had only experienced epistaxis previously.

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Table 2: Responses of true/false questions about epistaxis knowledge Question Response Count (n=502) Percentage Stop the bleeding by blocking the nose with tissue paper, 52.6 True\* 246 cotton, or any similar object 238 47.4 False Stop the bleeding by changing the position of the head True\* 391 77.9 False 22.1 111 Stop the bleeding by applying ice on the nose, head, or True\* 310 61.8 between the eyes False 192 38.2 Hot beverages exacerbate epistaxis True\* 267 53.2 False 235 46.8 Hot baths exacerbate epistaxis True\* 316 62.9 False 37.1 186 Exposure to hot places and hot weather exacerbate epistaxis True\* 416 82.9 False 86 17.1 Doing strenuous exercises exacerbates epistaxis True\* 356 70.9 False 146 29.1 Sneezing is related to epistaxis True\* 212 42.2 False 290 57.8 Moisturizing the nose reduces epistaxis True\* 360 71.7 False 142 28.3 True\* 302 60.2 Smoking causes epistaxis to recur False 200 39.8

Question with (\*) mark is the correct answer

Question	Response	Count (n=502)	Percentage
If having epistaxis	Stopping or controlling it by pressure*	432	86.1
	Leave it	70	13.9
Applied the pressure on the	Bottom of the nose*	150	29.9
	The upper part of the nose	223	44.4
	Do not know	129	25.7
The duration of pressing on the area	<5 min	227	45.2
	5-10 min *	254	50.6
	11-20 min	17	3.4
	>20 min	4	0.8
Changing the position of the head is by	Tilting head backward	249	49.6
	Tilting head forward*	253	50.4
The right time to go to the emergency	After 20 min*	205	40.8
room	After 40 min	103	20.5
	After 60 min	92	18.3
	At any time	102	20.3
Amount of bleeding that should be	>1 cup*	66	13.1
considered a large amount	One full cup	71	14.1
	One half of a cup	121	24.1
	One quarter of a cup	151	30.1
	One third of a cup	93	18.5

Question with a (\*) mark is the correct answer

Regarding the factors associated with an increased level of knowledge about first-aid management of nosebleeds, parents who were older than 35 years, had more than four children, attended previous training on first-aid management, had epistaxis, and who had previously treated others with epistaxis expressed a higher score of knowledge about first-aid management of epistaxis.

Our results were in accordance with the study conducted in Madinah. Also, parents with four to six children who had taken courses in first aid and had experience with nosebleeds had a higher knowledge of general first-aid management.<sup>[3]</sup> Regarding first-aid management of epistaxis, our findings about age were similar to a Riyadh study conducted among the general population: Knowledge was higher among older participants.<sup>[5]</sup>

Moreover, our results also encourage the Ministry of Health, primary care providers, and family physicians to educate and inform the public about epistaxis and how to manage it in a proper and safe manner. This will help strengthen the weak points that could lead to poor knowledge.

30.9

Table 4: Participants' scores on the knowledge of epistaxis

Count (n=502) Percentage

Level of knowledge

Poor knowledge 8 1.6

Moderate knowledge 339 67.5

155

Good knowledge

Table 5: Factors affecting the level of knowledge Factors Level of Knowledge P Poor Moderate Good Sex Male 2 (1.0) 135 (68.9) 59 (30.1) 0.69 Female 6(2.0)204 (66.7) 96 (31.4) Education Uneducated 0(0)5 (41.7) 7 (58.3) 0.118 Educated 8 (1.6) 334 (68.2) 148 (30.2) Age (years) <35 4 (2.6) 108 (70.1) 42 (27.3) 0.256 ≥35 4 (1.1) 231 (66.4) 113 (32.4) Number of children <4 5 (1.1) 308 (68.6) 136 (30.3) 0.030\* >4 3(5.7)31 (58.5) 19 (35.8) Marital status Unmarried 2(5.7)23 (65.7) 10 (28.6) 0.159 Married 6(1.3)316 (67.7) 145 (31.0) Source of information Medical 6 (1.5) 271 (66.9) 128 (31.6) 0.657 68 (70.1) Non-medical 2(2.1)27 (27.8) Taken any first aid courses Yes 4 (1.4) 182 (63.6) 100 (35.0) 0.66 No 4 (1.9) 157 (72.7) 55 (25.5) Having epistaxis 100 (35.0) 0.066 Yes 4 (1.4) 182 (63.6)

Treated anyone with epistaxis

No

Yes

No

### Conclusion

4 (1.9)

3(1.0)

5 (2.7)

157 (72.7)

200 (63.5)

139 (74.3)

55 (255)

112 (35.6)

43 (23.0)

0.004\*

Our results showed a moderate level of knowledge among Saudi parents regarding first-aid management of epistaxis. Being elder, having a high number of children, having attended previous first-aid courses, and having experience of or experience treating others with epistaxis were correlated with a higher level of knowledge about first-aid management of epistaxis. First-aid training programs should be performed at primary health care centers in Taif city for parents of children to reduce the early mortality and morbidity of emergencies. Furthermore, as a result of the widespread use of social media recently, the Ministry of Health and physicians should create first aid awareness course programs throughout social media.

Future studies on the first-aid management of epistaxis, including large sample sizes from various regions in Saudi Arabia, are recommended to assess the level of knowledge, practice, and

the associated factors among all populations and not only those attending primary health care centers.

# **Strengths**

Our study is the first study to assess the level of knowledge among parents in Taif city, Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, it included a large sample size. The study not only investigated the parents' knowledge level but also discussed the factors that affected their knowledge and how they might influence the level of knowledge.

#### Limitation

The study depended only on the parents who attended the primary health care centers throughout the study period to assess the knowledge level. In addition to this, the study focused only on the knowledge level and did not give attention to the practice level of parents, which is more critical in managing epistaxis.

# **Key points**

- 1. The study indicated that parents who attended the primary health care centers throughout the study period showed a moderate knowledge level of epistaxis management.
- Many factors significantly affected the knowledge level including old age, high numbers of children, attending previous first-aid courses, and experiencing or treating others with epistaxis.

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## **Ethical approval**

Consent and ethical approval have been obtained from Alhada Armed Forces Hospital. No extra charges were made by the participants in this research as a result of treatments or investigations as just the questionnaire was used to get the data. Before completing the questionnaire, informed consent was acquired. Since no names or other means of identification were used in the study, the personal information of the participants was handled privately and was not shared.

#### **Authors contribution**

**BSA:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Software **AMJ:** Visualization, Data curation, Writing-Original draft preparation. **ASA:** Data curation, Investigation. **MAA:** Supervision, Project administration, Reviewing, and Editing. **BSAM:** Software, Editing initial draft. **HAA:** Writing-Reviewing and Editing, **SMA:** Data curation, Investigation.

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Nil.

<sup>\*</sup> Level of significance is 0.05

Table 6: 1	Factors	affecting	the total	score	of i	knowledge
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Factors	The total score of knowledge		
	Median	Interquartile range	
Sex			
Male	9.00	3	0.942
Female	9.00	4	
Education			
Uneducated	11.00	5	0.350
Educated	9.00	3	
Age (years)			
<35	9.00	4	0.017*
≥35	9.00	3	
Number of children			
≤4	9.00	4	0.281
>4	9.00	3	
Marital status			
Married	9.00	4	0.851
Unmarried	9.00	3	
Source of information			
Medical	9.00	3	0.927
Non- medical	9.00	3	
Taken any first aid course			
Yes	10.00	3	0.002*
No	9.00	4	
Having epistaxis			
Yes	9.00	3	0.026*
No	9.00	4	
Treated anyone with epistaxis			
Yes	9.00	3	0.001*
No	9.00	3	

<sup>\*</sup> Level of significance is 0.05

## **Conflicts of interest**

There are no conflicts of interest.

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