

Bedwetting

Definition

- Wetting the bed at night while asleep
- The medical name is nocturnal enuresis

Health Information

Causes

- Most children who wet the bed have small bladders. Their bladders can't hold all the urine made during the night.
- Also, they usually are deep sleepers. They do not wake up when their bladders are full.
- Bedwetting also runs in families (genetic).
- Bedwetting is not caused by emotional problems.

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- Bedwetting is very common.
- It occurs in 15% of 5 year olds.
- It is a hard problem to cure, because it happens during sleep.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Helping a Younger Child Overcome Bedwetting:

- The secret to becoming dry is to get up every night to urinate. In other words, every wet night was a night they forgot to get up. Remind your child before bed he should get up at night.
- Children with frequent bedwetting usually can't hold urine back until morning.
- Make it easier to get to the toilet. Put a night light in the bathroom. If the bathroom is a long distance away, use a portable potty. Put it in the bedroom. Boys may just need a bucket.
- **Parent awakening:** On some nights, wake your child up when you go to bed. To make this a learning experience, however, your only job is to awaken him. He must find the bathroom and use the toilet on his own.

3. Helping Your 6 year old Child: Have your child give himself a bedtime pep-talk every night about getting up:

- Lie on your bed with your eyes closed.
- Pretend it's the middle of the night.
- Pretend your bladder is full and you have to go.
- Pretend your bladder is trying to wake you up.
- Pretend your bladder is saying, "Get up before it's too late."
- Then run to the bathroom and empty your bladder.
- Remind yourself to get up like this during the night.

4. **Helping Your 8 year old Child:**

- Buy a bedwetting alarm. They teach self-awakening and have the highest cure rate of any approach. Go to www.bedwettingstore.com for help.
- Don't buy an alarm until your child has learned to awaken to your voice.
- Alarms have 2 parts. The moisture sensor attaches to the underwear. It is triggered by just a few drops of urine. Most alarms turn on a loud sound that awakens your child. Another type awakens the child by vibrations. Some alarms do both.
- Your child needs to operate the alarm by himself.
- If you can't afford an enuresis alarm, consider using an alarm clock. Set it for three or four hours after he turns in.
- Finally, your child needs to be motivated to solve this problem. Give him some ideas, but don't get over-involved. Your child has to solve bedwetting on his own.

5. **What to Expect:**

- Most children who wet the bed stop between ages 6 and 10.
- Even severe cases get over it as teens.
- Once committed to using an alarm, dry nights will start to occur.

Call Your Doctor If

- Passing urine causes pain or burning
- Wetting also occurs when awake
- Not better after trying this treatment for 3 months
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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