

Pediatric Conditions Bedwetting (Enuresis)

Why does my child wet the bed?

Wetting the bed is a common problem. It is normal for children to wet their bed until the age of 6 years old. Many children who wet the bed have a small bladder. A child's bladder cannot hold all the urine that is produced at night. Also children can sleep deeply and not awaken when their bladder is full. Most children who wet the bed have healthy kidneys and do not have emotional problems. It is important to help the child correctly, to prevent emotional problems later.

How long does this last?

Most children who wet their bed will stop doing so between the ages of 6 and 10 years old. Even without aid, all children surpass it at some point. It is important to help the child surpass bed wetting without them feeling bad about themselves.

How can I help my child?

- Help your child awake during the night to use the bathroom
- Make the bathroom easily accessible. Leave a night light in the bathroom or put a portable potty in their room if the bathroom is too far away.
- Make sure your child drinks plenty of fluids throughout the morning and afternoon. While greater fluid intake will produce more urine, it helps the bladder expand.
- You should try to stop fluid intake 2 hours prior to bedtime.
- Make sure your child uses the bathroom before going to bed.
- Do not put diapers or pullups on them; your child might not feel the need to wake up at night.
- Congratulate your child in the morning when he or she is dry.
- Be pleasant when your child wets the bed. Most children feel guilty and ashamed by their bed-wetting problem. They require encouragement. Jokes and punishments do not help them. Pressure will only cause them to continue to wet the bed.
- Reward your child for staying dry with something that he or she would really enjoy.
- Praise sincerely any and every improvement.

What happens if my child is already 6 years old?

When the child turns 6 years of age, several things can be done for additional help.

Remind your child to wake up at night on their own. There are several enuresis alarms that can help with that. Have them practice the following:

1. Have them pretend to be asleep (lay in the bed with eyes closed).

2. Have them pretend the bladder is full and they have the urge to urinate.
3. Act as if their bladder is trying to wake them up.
4. Then go to the bathroom and empty bladder.

Practice during the day. Tell your child whenever they have the urge to urinate, they should go to their room instead and lay on the bed with eyes closed.

Have your child change their wet clothing at night. If your child feels like urinating, they should try to stop the flow. Have your child run to the bathroom to see if there is still urine left in the bladder. Make sure they put on dry clothing. Also have them put a dry towel over the wet part on the bed.

What happens if my child is over 8 years old?

Try all the suggestions. Perhaps you may want to speak to the doctor about medications or the use of bed-wetting alarms.

Call the doctor during office hours if:

- There is pain while urinating
- Urine flow is weak or thin
- Child also gets wet during the day
- Bed-wetting is a new problem (if your child used to be dry)
- Child is over 7 years of age
- Child is over 6 years of age and shows no improvement after 3 months of following the above suggestions