



Nocturnal Enuresis (Bedwetting)

Urology Care
FOUNDATION™
*The Official Foundation of the
American Urological Association*

WHAT IS ENURESIS (BEDWETTING)?

When children urinate without control while they sleep, it is called nocturnal enuresis. It's also known as bedwetting.

More than 5 million children in the U.S. have issues with enuresis. There are two types:

- Primary nocturnal enuresis are children over the age of 5-6 who never had a dry night
- Secondary nocturnal enuresis is when a child is able to have dry nights for at least 6 months, but starts bedwetting again (often linked with stress)

WHAT ARE COMMON CAUSES OF BEDWETTING?

Being lazy or willful is almost never a reason a child wets the bed. Bedwetting is caused by several things:

- Family history (genetics)
- Slow development of brain-bladder control
- Smaller than expected bladder capacity
- Making too much urine while asleep
- Sleep disorders
- Constipation
- Stress

HOW IS BEDWETTING DIAGNOSED?

If your child is over the age of 6, and often wakes to a wet bed they may have a problem. You and your health care provider will want to learn the cause of bedwetting. Before talking with your pediatrician, try to keep track of your child's bathroom habits in a bladder diary.

If your health care provider needs more information, your child may have a urinalysis, blood test, bladder scan or other tests.

HOW IS BEDWETTING TREATED?

There are many treatments for bedwetting. Some work better than others. These strategies may be tried one at a time, or together. Often, treatment starts with simple changes like:

- Reduce the amount of fluids your child drinks 1-2 hours before bed
- Create a schedule for bathroom use (changing toilet habits)
- Use wetting alarm devices
- Prescription drugs

These strategies have not been shown to help:

- Avoiding food and fluid
- Waking the child at night to get up to urinate
- Pelvic muscle exercises
- Alternative therapies

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Several things can help your child's bedwetting issue:

- Remember, bedwetting is not the child's fault. Avoid punishing or teasing your child.
- Encourage regular bathroom visits during the day. Your child should try to go at least 5 times per day and just before bed.
- Your child should have at least one bowel movement each day. Stool should be well formed and soft. It may help, to ask your pediatrician how to improve bowel health.
- Avoid high sugar, carbonated and caffeinated drinks.
- Drinking should take place mostly between 7 am and 5 pm, just sips after 5 pm.
- Use pull-ups when your child sleeps outside the home.
- To help manage bedwetting: use a mattress protector, washable/ disposable products and room deodorizers.
- After an accident, wash the child and use products to prevent the skin from getting sore.
- Keep a calendar to write down how well a treatment is working.

There are a lot of options to help your child if they have bedwetting problems. But, for most children bedwetting issues end on its own.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER:

- What is causing my child to wet the bed?
- When should this problem be addressed?
- Will he or she outgrow wetting the bed? When?
- Does my child need further tests? If so, which ones?
- What treatments are available, and which do you recommend?
- How long will treatment take?
- What are the pros and cons for each treatment option?
- What do I have to do to help my child be successful?

ABOUT THE UROLOGY CARE FOUNDATION

The Urology Care Foundation is the world's leading urologic Foundation – and the official Foundation of the American Urological Association. We provide information for those actively managing their urologic health and those ready to make healthy changes. Our information is based on the American Urological Association resources and is reviewed by medical experts.

To learn more, visit: UrologyHealth.org/UrologicConditions - or go to UrologyHealth.org/FindAUrologist to find a doctor near you.

Disclaimer

This information is not a tool for self-diagnosis or a substitute for professional medical advice. Please talk to your urologist or health care provider about your health concerns. Always consult a health care provider before you start or stop any treatments, including medications.

For printed materials about Nocturnal Enuresis and other urologic issues, visit UrologyHealth.org/Order or call 800-828-7866.