

# Bedwetting: Is it Normal?

Yes, it may be normal. It is very common for young children to wet the bed at night. It is not your child's fault, and the child should not be punished for wetting the bed. Every child matures and develops night time bladder control at different ages.

Most children begin to stay dry at night between the ages of 3 and 8 years old. Approximately 15% of 5 year old and 1% of 15 year old still have nighttime wetting. It is more common for boys than girls and can run in families.

## Bedwetting Causes:

- The signal between the bladder and brain is maturing slower than usual
- Smaller than normal bladder
- Making more urine at night
- Deep sleep that does not allow the child to sense a full bladder

Bedwetting is not usually caused by medical, emotional, or behavioral problems. Your doctor will be able to determine if there is a medical problem.

## Bedwetting treatment

Most of the time children will stop wetting the bed on their own and will not need treatment. Treatment is usually initiated around age 7 when camps and sleepovers begin to occur and this is usually the age when the child desires to be dry. There are a number of treatment options including behavioral therapy, alarm therapy, and medications.

- Have the child urinate before bed
- Move fluid intake to earlier in the day and limit fluids 2 hours before bed
- Use a bed wetting alarm. The alarm works best for children over age 7. Discuss with your doctor which alarm type is best for your child and how to use it
- There are number of medications used to treat nighttime wetting
- Keep a calendar of wet and dry nights to monitor the child's progress
- If the child is able to stay dry for 30 nights in a row then the treatment can be stopped to see if the nighttime wetting returns. If it does then the treatment can be restarted.
- Waking the child at night to urinate is usually not beneficial because you cannot predict when the wetting occurs

## When to see a doctor:

- If urinating more than normal
- More thirsty than normal
- Burning with urination
- Swelling of ankles or feet
- Wetting the bed after being dry for several months

Remember nighttime wetting is not your child's fault. Many children have nighttime wetting. You should not punish, tease, or get mad at your child for wetting the bed. Nighttime wetting will usually resolve with time and without treatment. If you have questions, are worried your child is still bedwetting, or would like medical treatment for bedwetting talk to your child's doctor or a pediatric urology specialist.



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