

# “helping your child to have a dry night”



How are  
you today?

## The likelihood of bedwetting decreases as children get older. But at the age of 5 as many as 1 in 5 children still experience problems staying dry at night.\*

If you're concerned that your child is experiencing problems staying dry at night, your GP or nurse may be able to help you and them manage the problem.

It is important that children suffering with bedwetting are diagnosed early and are offered an appropriate treatment intervention. Self-esteem is improved by treatment in young children so early intervention is justified.

## What causes bedwetting?

Many children who wet the bed feel embarrassed and alone. It's important to know that bedwetting is a common problem and is not your child's fault.

Why some children take longer than others to become dry at night isn't fully understood. It's not linked to poor toilet training or laziness. Girls usually become dry at night earlier than boys.

Bedwetting happens when there is no conscious awareness during sleep that they might need the toilet. It could be down to one of the following reasons:

- **Lack of a hormone called vasopressin.** This regulates the amount of urine produced by the body during the night. If there is not enough, the kidneys continue to produce large amounts of urine which the bladder can't hold
- **An over active bladder.** Children may experience the need to go to the toilet urgently and frequently. This happens when the muscles in the bladder contract before it is full and this can happen during the night
- **Constipation.** If the bowel is full it can press against the bladder resulting in bedwetting at night
- **A Urinary Tract Infection (UTI).** This can give a feeling of always needing the toilet and can cause or exacerbate any problem
- **Anxiety, stress or changes in routine.** Events like starting school, the birth of a new sibling, exams and/or bullying can delay a child becoming dry at night or can cause bedwetting in a child who had previously been dry

\* NICE reference: Adapted from CG111 Nocturnal enuresis - the management of bedwetting in children and young people: understanding NICE guidance, October 2010.

The good news is that for most children something can be done to help identify, manage and resolve these possible causes. Ask your GP, nurse or school nurse who can recommend appropriate treatment options for your child.

## How else can you help?

In addition to treatments to tackle the problem there are practical things you can do:

- Ensure your child drinks at least six water based drinks spread evenly throughout the day and they go to the toilet regularly

Age	Sex	Total drinks per day
4 - 8 years	Female	1000ml - 1400ml
4 - 8 years	Male	1000ml - 1400ml
9 - 13 years	Female	1200ml - 2100ml
9 - 13 years	Male	1400ml - 2300ml
14 - 18 years	Female	1400ml - 2500ml
14 - 18 years	Male	2100ml - 3200ml

- Encourage your child to be actively engaged in decisions about treatments
- Ensure they go to the toilet before bed and can get to the toilet easily in the night. A night light or leaving a light on in the hall can help. Keep bedroom and bathroom doors open
- A good winding down routine each night may help, for example, a bath or shower and then some relaxed quiet time, perhaps reading, before sleeping
- The release of vasopressin is part of the winding down process at night. Change in light helps this process, it is important that the child sleeps in a darkened bedroom and doesn't fall asleep with the TV on
- Remain calm, positive and support your child

With your encouragement and the help of others, your child can be supported in having a dry night. If bedwetting persists your GP or nurse may be able to offer you medication or an alarm to assist.



For more information about bedwetting or advice for you and your child to help them become dry at night you can speak with PromoCon. PromoCon, working under the UK registered charity Disabled Living, can offer confidential and impartial advice on a whole range of childhood continence issues. Whether you are struggling to potty train a toddler or you have a child with more complex needs their team can help.

**0161 607 8219**

**[www.promocon.co.uk](http://www.promocon.co.uk)**

More information and educational resources can be found at  
**[www.stopbedwetting.org](http://www.stopbedwetting.org)**

Join our community online at:



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