



Wetting Concerns

Your child may be wetting for one of the following reasons.

Your child may:

- "forget" to go to the toilet (because s/he was too busy playing).
- have a fear of the toilet.
- be having trouble dealing with having a new brother or sister.
- be under a lot of stress at home or preschool/daycare/school.
- drink too much before bedtime.
- drink too much caffeine.

The wetting may be causing one or more of the following problems:

- Other children may tease your child when s/he wets.
- You and your child may be having trouble getting along because of the wetting.
- Your child may feel bad about him/herself when s/he wets the bed or his/her pants.

Here are some facts parents should know about bedwetting:

- About 15% of children wet the bed after the age of 3.
- More boys than girls wet their beds.
- It runs in families.
- Usually bedwetting stops by the teenage years.

If your child has a wetting problem, your child's doctor can tell you some ways to help your child wet less often.

Adapted in part from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Primary Care (DSM-PC) (1996)

Day Wetting

Some kids are not interested in staying dry during the day, but are clearly capable of doing so. If this describes your child, then try this technique. Take your child to the toilet every hour and a half. Sit your child on the toilet for 3-5 minutes. Make this a calm and rewarding activity. Try playing music or reading books and running the tap water to help them pee. If your child cooperates and is dry when away from the toilet, then give simple rewards.

For example, give 1 M&M for sitting when asked, 2 for urinating, 3 for being dry after 1.5 hours. (Or stickers can be substituted for M&M's). If your child wets their clothes or resists sitting on the toilet, restrict their activities for the next hour and a half. "Ground" them from

their normal play activities (e.g. No playing outside, no TV/videos, no tricycle, etc.). This kind of "grounding" may help them focus on attending to the urge to pee.

Night Training

When your child is completely clean and dry during the day and usually dry after a night of sleep you may want to encourage night time dryness. Staying dry at night is more due to physical maturity not learning, however.

One approach that children find rewarding is a night training calendar. For every dry night allow your child to choose and place a sticker on the calendar for that day. After a certain number of stickers, award a prize. For longer periods of dryness, prizes can get bigger. Set up prizes and rules in advance. Always be encouraging and positive. Don't scold or criticize your child for accidents.

Some children have a harder time achieving night dryness. If this sounds like your child, here are some other techniques you can try.

- "Magic quarter" self-suggestion technique. Every night before going to bed have your child hold a quarter out at arms length. Tell them to think about waking up to pee and returning to a "nice dry cozy bed". Tell them that they feel the quarter getting "warmer and heavier" until finally it drops to the floor. Have them practice this every night before bed.
- Alarm. This cool gizmo can help your child learn to recognize the sensation of needing to pee. This is how it works. A sensor is attached to your child's underwear with a metal strip near where the pee first touches the underpants. When their underwear becomes wet, a buzzer sounds waking them up. They should take themselves to the toilet to finish peeing. They should change themselves into clean underwear and pajamas and put a towel over any wet spots on the bed. They should reset the alarm. If they don't wake up enough to do these steps at first, you can take them to do it without turning off the alarm. After a week or so they will start being awake enough to do it on their own. Take them to the toilet to finish peeing. Change them into clean underwear and pajamas and put a towel over any wet spots on the bed. Reset the alarm. Keep a record of success using the night training calendar. When your child has been dry for two weeks have them drink a lot in the evening before going to bed. This will make it harder to stay dry and teach their body how to hold pee even better. The alarm costs about \$80 and is covered by Medicaid.