Bedwetting

Most children learn to use the toilet between 2 and 4 years of age. Even after children are toilet-trained, they may wet the bed until they are older. It's even common for 6-year-olds to wet the bed once in a while. Some children still wet the bed at age 12.

What to Do About Bedwetting

Bedwetting usually goes away as your child gets older. Talk with the doctor if you or your child are worried about bedwetting. These tips can help in the meantime.

Try These Tips

- **Protect the bed.** Put a plastic cover under the sheets.
- **Have your child use the toilet just before bedtime.**
- **Don't give your child soda pop (especially cola) before bed.**
- **Wake your child up to use the toilet** 1 or 2 hours after going to sleep. This will help him or her stay dry through the night.
- **Reward your child for dry nights.** Try a star chart. (See "Using a Star Chart" on the right.) Do not punish your child for wet nights.
- **Let your child help change wet sheets and covers.** But don't force your child to do this. If you do, your child will think he or she is being punished.
- **Set a no-teasing rule in your family.** Let others know that it's not the child's fault.
- **Don't make bedwetting a big issue** so your child won't either.

Tell Your Child

- Wetting the bed is not his or her fault.
- It won't last forever.
- Lots of kids go through this, but no one talks about it at school.

I Can Keep Dry!

Week	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1		★		★		★	★
2		★		★	★		★
3	★	★	★		★	★	★
4		★	★	★	★		★

Using a Star Chart

Try using a calendar and star-shaped stickers to keep track of your child's "dry" nights. Each morning, check your child's bed. If it stayed dry all night, praise your child. Let him or her put a sticker on the calendar for that day. (You can also make a chart that shows the days of the week. See the chart above.)

For many children, just seeing the stars add up is enough. Other children may need a reward. For example, do something special with your child after a whole week of dry nights.

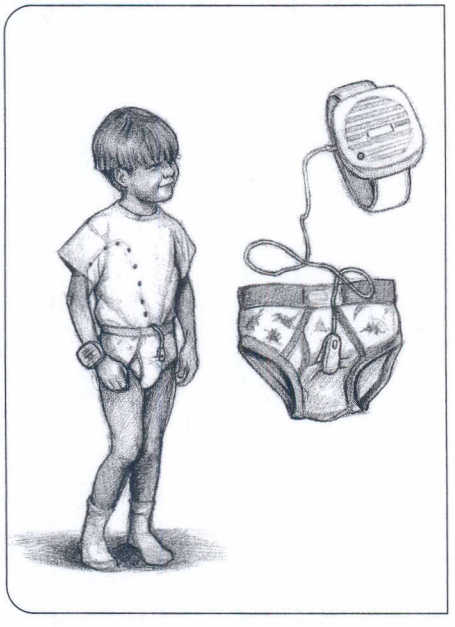
Continued on back

Continued from front

If You Need More Help…

Try the tips on the first page of this handout for 1 to 3 months. Then, talk with your child's doctor if bedwetting is still a problem. The doctor may suggest one of the following:

A Bedwetting Alarm



You can use a bedwetting alarm. The alarm goes off when it gets wet. Then the child learns to wake up to use the toilet. Over time, this helps a child stay dry at night. But don't give up. It can take weeks or months to work.

Bedwetting alarms tend to work best for children who have some dry nights. Ask your child's doctor what kind of alarm would be best for your child.

Medicine

There are some medicines for treating bedwetting in older children. They almost *never cure* bedwetting. But they can help your child go to a sleepover or camp. Ask your child's doctor about them.

Reasons for Bedwetting

We don't always know what causes bedwetting. Here are some possible reasons:

- There is a family history of bedwetting. (Most children who wet the bed have at least one parent who did it as a child.)
- Your child is a deep sleeper and doesn't wake up when he or she has to pee.
- Your child's **bladder*** is still too small to hold urine all night.
- Your child has trouble passing stool (poop). This can put pressure on the bladder.
- Your child has a minor illness, is very tired, or is going through changes or stress at home.

Signs of a Health Problem

Talk with your child's doctor if:

- Your child has been completely toilet-trained for more than 6 months AND
- Your child starts wetting the bed again.

These 2 things together *may* mean that your child has a health problem.

* *Word to Know*

bladder—a hollow organ that holds urine in the body until you go to the toilet.

To learn more, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Web site at www.aap.org.

Your child's doctor will tell you to do what's best for your child.
This information should not take the place of talking with your child's doctor.

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