

Bedwetting: Tips for Kids

Bedwetting alarms and time are the only cures for bedwetting. When alarms are used the right way there is a 60 to 80% chance of having dry nights.

What can I do to work on bedwetting?

It is important for you and your parent(s) to work together. You need to have a plan and follow it. The plan helps your brain learn to:

- Wake you up to go to the bathroom.
- Help your bladder hold the urine until morning.

Things to help you be dry.

- **The most important thing is to be positive and believe you can be dry.** Before you go to sleep, tell yourself that you will be dry over night. Say, "If I need to use the toilet, I will get up and go". This is called visualizing. Lots of sports stars or actors do this before they play or go on stage.
- **Drink a lot of liquid during the day.** Your nurse or doctor will help you figure out how much you should drink during the day. This helps your bladder to learn to hold more urine. You will be less thirsty at night and it may help your stools stay softer.
- **After supper, limit the amount you drink. No caffeine, chocolate, soda or citrus during or after dinner.** These may bother your bladder or make you go more.
- **Use the toilet just before you go to sleep.** Use the toilet first before getting ready for bed and try to go again a few minutes later. This helps your bladder to be empty. If you read or watch TV before going to sleep, get up and go one more time.
- **Get enough sleep.** If you are over tired, you sleep more soundly. It is hard for your body to notice when your bladder is full.
- **Help take wet sheets off and put them in the wash.** This is not a punishment, but helping to be responsible. You shouldn't be punished or teased for something you have no control over.
- **Other than time, a bedwetting alarm is the only cure for bedwetting.** It helps the brain learn when the bladder is full. You learn to wake up and go to the bathroom or to hold your urine all night. This may take several months.
- **There are medicines that may help keep you dry. They are treatments, not cures.** The bedwetting may return once the medicine has been stopped. Your doctor or nurse can talk with you about these medicines.
- **Feel good about the things you do to try and stay dry.** You can't control if you are wet. You **can** remember to limit fluids, take your medicine, or use your alarm. These are things you should be proud of.

If I use an alarm what should I do when the alarm goes off?

When the alarm goes off you need to:

1. Wake up and turn off the alarm.
2. Go to the bathroom to finish emptying your bladder.
3. Take your wet clothes off and put on dry ones. Put the alarm on the dry clothes.
4. Put a dry sheet on the bed. A waterproof pad or towel may make it easier.
5. Go back to sleep.

At first, your parent may hear the alarm before you do. Your parent will need to gently wake you and tell you what to do.

How do I know if the alarm is helping?

If you wet the bed more than once each night you may be wet fewer times each night. The size of the wet spot on the bed will also get smaller. In time you will be dry all night, or learn to wake up and go to the bathroom when the bladder is full. It may take a few months for you to be dry. Don't give up! Look for these ways to know it is better:

1. **Do not give up too soon.** That is the main reason that using the alarm fails to help. **Also be sure to use the alarm the right way.**
2. **Use it every night**, unless you are away from home or have friends sleeping over. If you skip those nights, use the alarm again as soon as you can.
3. **Practice using the alarm in the daytime.** There are a few ways to do this. Sit on the toilet and start going to the bathroom. When the alarm goes off, try to stop urinating. Then be sure to empty your bladder.

When you feel like you need to go to the bathroom, go and lie on your bed. Think about how full your bladder feels. Now make the alarm go off. When it goes off, go to the bathroom and void. Try a way that works for you.

4. **Keep a chart of your doing.** Mark how often you are dry, if you followed the directions when the alarm went off, and the size of the wet spot.
5. **Get enough sleep so you are not tired during the day.** If the alarm goes off more than once a night, you may want to leave it off after the first or second time it alarms.
6. **When you have been dry for 14 days in a row, wear the alarm every other day.** Then every third day. If you start to wet the bed again, use the alarm every night until you are dry again for at least 2 weeks.
7. **You may get tired of using the alarm.** If you do, think of things that will be better when you no longer wet the bed. Talk with your parents or health care provider if you get frustrated. You may be able to come up with some ideas to make using the alarm easier for you.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.