

## **Advice for teenagers**

### **Am I the only one?**

No, you are just one of many, but not surprisingly very few teenagers want to talk about it. In this country, bedwetting (nocturnal enuresis is the medical name) is thought to affect half a million children and adolescents. So you can see that you are not alone in seeking help.

### **Why do I wet the bed?**

There are a number of possible factors which have been implicated. These include stress, a family history of bedwetting, or too much urine produced overnight. Your doctor or specialist nurse will discuss these in more detail with you to determine the most suitable treatment programme. In the majority of cases the skill required to stay dry will eventually come. Getting some help may speed up the process and save a great deal of anguish.

### **What can I do?**

There are some things you can do to help yourself. For example, try and drink regularly throughout the day – but be careful about alcohol, fizzy drinks, tea or coffee, particularly during the evenings, as these can cause more urine to be produced. You could try cutting out each in turn to see if this makes a difference.

### **In addition...**

It's always a good idea to see your doctor. Once satisfied that your bladder is not the cause of the problem he or she might want to discuss the treatment options with you. These could include seeking advice from a bedwetting specialist at the enuresis clinic where alarm treatment is often used. The alternative, which only doctors can prescribe is a medicine in the form of tablets that reduce the amount of urine produced overnight.

### **What treatment is available?**

Your Doctor will be able to determine the probable cause and therefore offer an appropriate treatment which could be:

#### **Antidiuretic Medication**

This is a medicine that helps decrease your urine production at night. This ensures less urine is produced during the night and reduces the risk of bedwetting.

#### **Bladder relaxant medication**

Helps your bladder hold more urine

#### **Enuresis alarm**

This works by waking you if you start to wet the bed during the night so you can finish emptying your bladder in the toilet. It may help you respond more quickly to a full bladder during your sleep.

#### **Bladder retraining**

This involves increased fluid intake and more toilet trips.

### **Do you have any other advice?**

There are some things you can do to help yourself, for example:

Try and drink regularly throughout the day - But be careful about fizzy drinks, tea, coffee or alcohol, particularly during the evenings, as this can cause more urine to be produced.

Don't drink too much just before you go to bed.

Be positive - At least 1 in 6 children and teenagers stop wetting the bed every year and so you should grow out of the problem as you get older.

Have a wash - Try and wash yourself properly after wetting the bed so that you are clean when you go back to sleep.

### **Why do I wet the bed?**

There are a number of possible causes, and these include:

Your urine production might not slow down at night - If you wet the bed, you may not produce enough vasopressin, the substance that reduces urine production. This causes the kidneys to produce more urine than your bladder can hold.

You might suffer from a small or unstable bladder - the bladder is like a stretchy bag which stores the urine produced by your kidneys. Some people have a smaller bladder than normal causing it to empty sooner. For some people the bladder may not be functioning properly. It may be overactive resulting in wetting before it is full. The bladder may contract and empty as it is filling with urine. This results in the bladder needing to empty before it reaches full capacity.

You have difficulty waking at night - Some people are not able to wake-up when the bladder is full and so when it empties, they wet the bed. However, difficulty in waking on its own does not cause bedwetting and is normally present with one of the other problems.