

Still Wet at Night?



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Bed wetting or 'nocturnal enuresis' is distressing for both the child and parents. Wet linen, missed sleep overs and embarrassment all impact the child and the family.

Many treatments for bed wetting have been developed over the years, some with limited success, but the underlying problem remains obscure.

What should I expect?

Every child is different but as a guide it is common for both boys and girls to be mainly dry at night by 3 years of age. Some children will reach this milestone for a prolonged period and then return to wetting. This is known as secondary bed wetting. Other children will never cease wetting. This is primary bed wetting.

Bed wetting causes

Bed wetting, like many other conditions can result from a number of different causes. These can range from something as simple as a structural problem, to psychological factors or even a pathological condition requiring medical management. This is why band-aid approaches to bed wetting do not help as they do not treat the underlying problem. The **cause** of bed wetting must be identified so an appropriate treatment program can be used.

One of the common contributing factors to bed wetting is spinal subluxation. This involves abnormal changes in joints that impact the nerves in the area. The bladder is controlled by nerves that come from the spine, which are in turn controlled by the brain. Therefore, a joint problem anywhere in a child's spine, or even the skull itself, may irritate the nerves that directly or indirectly control the bladder. When these nerves are irritated the messages passing from the brain to the bladder and vice versa get confused, like an electrical system short-circuiting. The bladder is then capable of emptying without conscious control and this most commonly occurs when the child is asleep.

The chiropractors role

A chiropractor's role is to identify the cause and implement the appropriate treatment through co-management with other health professionals. Your chiropractor will ask you questions about any family history of bed wetting and other disorders, as these can predispose your child to particular causes of bed wetting that are more complex to resolve.

A chiropractor is trained to find and correct the vertebral subluxation that cause nerve interference. Correction maximises the chance of messages passing between the brain and bladder without interference, therefore improving the child's ability to control his or her bladder.

A parent's contribution to the management program of a child with bed wetting is vital to its success. You may be asked to monitor aggravating factors such as late nights or parties. Your child should always be encouraged and affirmed for dry nights and positively consoled after a wet night.

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