

Review Article

Nocturnal Enuresis (Bed Wetting)

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ABSTRACT

Nocturnal enuresis simply means involuntary and unintentional discharge of urine during night. Approximately 15-20% of all 5 to 6 year old wet the bed and most of them are boys. 3 to 5 years is the age when most children begin to stay dry at night and it is this age that the child is able to maintain complete bladder control, but it varies in different children.

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Introduction:

Nocturnal enuresis is involuntary wetting during deep sleep. Before age 5 or 6 year, nocturnal enuresis should probably be considered a normal feature of development. The condition usually improves by puberty, has prevalence in late adolescence of 1-3%, and is rare in adulthood.

Example:

Rinku falls into extremely deep sleep almost every night. His sleep is so deep that even on having an urge to urine does not wake Rinku and he sometimes wet the bed while asleep. Rinku feels embarrassed about his problem, but he is not alone. About one out of every hundred teen wets the bed. Most of them outgrow, through.

Incidence:

Nocturnal enuresis simply means involuntary and unintentional discharge of urine during night. Approximately 15-20% of all 5 to 6 year old wet the bed and most of them are boys. 3 to 5 years is the age when most children begin to stay dry at night and it is this age that the child is able to maintain complete bladder control, but it varies in different children.

The bladder is a muscular container for urine. It expands as urine enters and then contracts to push the urine out. In a person with normal bladder control nerves and bladder wall sends a message to brain, when it is full. Brain in return, sends a message to keep it from automatically emptying, until the person is ready to go to the

bathroom. However, the people with nocturnal enuresis have problem that causes them to pass urine involuntarily at night.

There are two types of nocturnal enuresis, primary and secondary. When a person wets the bed since he/she was a baby is termed as nocturnal enuresis. When condition develops at last after few months to years after a person learned to control his/her bladder, it is termed as secondary nocturnal enuresis.

The few causes, which can be associated with nocturnal enuresis, are

Sleep problem: Very deep sleep during night, like Rinku

Excessive urine output due to increased intake of fluids.

Genetics- such babies often have parents with same problem at about the same age (Scientists have identified specific gene that causes enuresis)

Abnormal position of urethra since birth may be a cause.

Psychological problem- divorce of parents, death in family, moving into new town, adapting to new school, family tension, nightmares etc.

Medical conditions - Diabetes, urinary tract infection, injury to spinal cord etc.

Bed wetting often has a psychological impact on children and their families. Children with this condition often have low self-esteem and their

interpersonal relationship, quality of life and school performance is affected.

If you are having trouble controlling your urine at night, it's a good idea to visit the Doctor to learn more about enuresis and to rule out possibility of other medical problem. Doctors could do several things to treat bed wetting, depending on its cause. If there is illness behind it, which occurs very rarely, it will be treated. If the past history, family history and physical examination do not suggest any specific medical condition and the urine tests are also negative, then there are several behavioural approaches-

1. Manage food and fluid habit. Reduce the amount of fluid intake before going to bed. Avoid dairy foods at night as it may prevent deep sleep that can contribute to nocturnal enuresis.
2. Behavioural modification- Family members who have outgrown condition can share their experiences to reduce the embarrassment, anxiety and feeling of isolation.
3. Let the child know that many other children do it too. Knowing that others have been affected in the same way will help the child to deal with the problem.
4. Encourage and praise the child for staying dry instead of punishing when child wets.
5. Periodically waking the child at night to use the bathroom.

Homoeopathic management:

If the problem of nocturnal enuresis is not solved with the above tips, and then Doctors can treat it with medications. Homoeopathy will seek to balance child's vital force, eliminating the imbalance of bed-wetting. Homoeopathy acts by strengthening the child's bladder and his/her mechanism for proper functioning. Commonly used Homoeopathic medicines are – Acid phos, Benzoic acid, Cantharides, Equisetum, Gelsemium, Lycopodium, Pulsetilla, Sanicula etc. These medicines should be taken under the advice and guidance of a qualified Homoeopath. Always remember, parents should use patience and care while waiting for the child to outgrow bed wetting.

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