

NIGHT-TIME BEDWETTING ELIMINATION STRATEGIES:

Positive Reinforcement Systems

The child is rewarded for each night he or she goes without bedwetting. The child is not punished if he or she is unable to go without bedwetting on a particular given night. When a child has a dry night, he or she will receive a point or sticker and after a pre-determined number of points or stickers have been accumulated, a prize is given to the child.

Awakening Programs

Have your child rehearse the sequence of events involved in getting up from bed to use the toilet during the night prior to going to bed each night. Another strategy is daytime rehearsal. When your child feels the urge to urinate, he or she should go to bed and pretend he or she is sleeping. He or she should then wait a few minutes and get out of bed to use the toilet.

The parent will need to awaken your child to go to the bathroom at the parents' bedtime, and have them go to the bathroom. For this to be productive, the child must locate the bathroom on his or her own and the child needs to be gradually conditioned to awaken easily with sound only. The expectation for the technique to work is from one to two weeks; however, if success is not achieved then the technique can continue while other methods are explored.

Bedwetting Alarms

Bedwetting alarms have become the mainstay of treatment. Up to 70%-90% of children stop bedwetting after using these alarms for 4-6 months.

The principle of bedwetting alarms is that the wetness of the urine bridges a gap in a sensor located on a pad on the bed or attached to your child's clothes. When the sensor gets wet, an alarm will go off. Your child will then awaken, shut off the alarm, get to the bathroom to finish urinating in the toilet, return to the bedroom, change clothes and the bedding, wipe down the sensor, reset the alarm, and return to sleep.

These alarms take time to work; and, for them to be effective, the child must want to use them. The child should use the alarm for a few weeks or even months before considering it a failure. Doctors generally prefer trying alarms first before going to medication since the alarm system has no side effects.