

# Bedwetting No More

At sleepovers, my eight-year-old daughter, Gaile, stayed up all night, terrified of falling asleep – paralyzed by the idea that her friends would discover her wet sleeping bag or the smell of urine when they awoke in the morning. Just in case she dosed off, she'd keep a glass of water by her side, ready to "accidentally" spill at a moment's notice.

After all, being teased for being clumsy is preferable to being ridiculed for wetting the bed.

So goes the life of children struggling with bedwetting. The agonizing fear of discovery, shame and feeling "different" rules their waking lives.

It's a shame I know well. I spent two years running from doctor to doctor, putting Gaile through scary and often painful tests, simply to find myself back at the same starting point – a doctor who said it was something she'd out-grow. In the meantime, Gaile continued to wake up every morning to wet sheets, feeling disappointed and humiliated.

When I saw that the doctors didn't have the answers, I decided to search on my own. I discovered a 60-year-old study that focused on sleep patterns and the bedwetter's inability to wake up when they needed to use the bathroom. Simply put, because a child sleeps so deeply, the bladder can't communicate with

the brain. Therefore, one unknowingly wets the bed. While I tried to put the pieces together, I also started to talk with other parents. I realized not only how common bedwetting was, (3-4 kids in every classroom), but I saw that what they all had in common was sleep so deep that even a fire alarm couldn't wake them!

As I watched my daughter's patterns – when she wet the bed, how hard it was to wake her, what she remembered in the morning – I began to see a pattern develop that I believed could be changed. I started to use bio-feedback and bladder exercises, which ultimately put an end to Gaile's bedwetting and the resulting symptoms. Because the concept was effective, before I knew it, friends and family were asking for help.

What I discovered was that bedwetting is a symptom of a much more serious problem – an inherited sleep disorder which can show up in many ways – night terrors, sleepwalking, sleep apnea. But for 15-20 million children, it's about

waking up to wet sheets. And if the sleep disorder isn't corrected, the bedwetting often continues into adulthood. If you think it's tough on a child in grade school, imagine how a teenager or a 35-year-old feels.

Many families have been told to just wait it out or they have been given drugs or have had their children misdiagnosed with ADD because of the lethargy they experienced from the sleep disorder. It's not that doctors don't want to help or that they don't empathize with the family's pain, but according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, less than 1% of bedwetting issues are caused by a physical problem. In other words, they are not trained to deal with enuresis in medical school, and, therefore, are at a loss for determining effective course of treatment.

If your child is struggling with bedwetting, think twice before you allow your doctor to prescribe drugs for bedwetting. The most common drugs are DDAVP and Tofranil – temporary fixes for a very serious problem, often with dangerous side effects. Once the drugs are discontinued, the wetting always resumes and furthers disappointment. Moreover, there have even been reports of deaths associated with their use.

If your child is over the age of four and still having night-time accidents, take a look around your own family. Did anyone else wet the bed, sleepwalk, have night terrors,

experience sleep apnea or some other similar sleep disorder? If so, it may be a sign that your child has inherited the sleep disorder that's causing the bedwetting. While in some cases, kids do stop wetting the bed in their teenage years, do not just "wait it out." The longer a child lives with this humiliation, the longer it will affect his self-esteem in years to come. Most importantly, if a child outgrows bedwetting—and it is uncertain whether they will—then they are left with the sleep disorder which can then manifest itself in one of the previously mentioned forms. We treat the sleep disorder first and foremost...the bedwetting is permanently cured as a result.



Barbara Moore is the Director of the Enuresis Treatment Center - Putting an end to bedwetting for life! She can be reached at her Farmington Hills office at 1-800-DRY-BED-1 or at [www.nobedwetting.com](http://www.nobedwetting.com).

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