

TECHNIQUES TO CURE NIGHTTIME BEHAVIOR

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Undergarments, pajamas or mattresses with alarms triggered by moisture are the most effective way of curing a child of bed wetting, according to a new article.

The article in the journal *Effective Health Care* said a good first step was to try some of the simpler behavioral techniques, like using a chart with stars or stickers to keep track of a child's success, or waking the child to use the toilet at night. But it warned that studies had found that parents are rarely prepared before they begin for the amount of work involved.

Experts consider most children to be ready to stay dry at night by age 5, the article said. Girls usually stop wetting the bed before boys, and almost all children grow out of the problem.

Some parents use drugs to prevent bed wetting, usually desmopressin, the article said, but they appear to work only as long as they are taken, making them appropriate for trips but not for training.

By contrast, using the alarms to wake children when urination is beginning has effects that last after the devices are put away, the article said. It recommended combining them with a technique called over-learning: After two dry weeks using the alarm, give the child a drink at bedtime until another two-week stretch of success is achieved before putting the alarm away for good.