

Bedwetting

Bedwetting or nocturnal enuresis is normal up to age 5 years.

After age 5 years, bedwetting is more common in kids with sickle cell disease. It is more common in boys than in girls.

Why do kids with sickle cell disease have trouble with bedwetting?

Sickle red blood cells cause injury to the kidneys. The kidneys lose their ability to hold on to water. This causes the kidneys to make very watery urine all the time.

Overnight, the bladder continues to fill up with watery urine. The bladder will fill and fill until it can't hold any more urine. At this point, the child will either wake to go to the bathroom or wet the bed.

For kids with sickle cell disease, medicines for bedwetting don't work very well. The best treatment is to teach your child to wake up and use the toilet.

- Wake your child every few hours to go to the toilet.
- There are several types of "potty alarms" that can be used at home to wake the child when wetting occurs.
- Limiting liquids after 6 pm can help.
- Make sure that your child is not drinking any tea, coffee, energy drinks, or soda with caffeine. These drinks can make more urine!
- To avoid damage to your child's bed, use a waterproof mattress pad.

Bedwetting can be frustrating. Avoid shaming or embarrassing your child. Remember that your child is **not** wetting the bed on purpose!



For more information please talk with your child's regular doctor or contact the Family Resource Center.

The Family Resource Center is a **FREE** health information library on the 3rd floor of St. Louis Children's Hospital. You can check out books or have information emailed or mailed directly to your home. Call 314.454.2350 or email frc@bjc.org