

Bella's Story - aged 8

Bella had always wet the bed at night for as long as she could remember, so she wears pull-ups and her mum buys special sheets that protect the bed.

Bella's Brownie troop are going on summer camp next month, and she really wants to go, but is so scared that her friends might see that she still wears nappies at night.

Bella struggled to wake up at night when her bladder was full, she was such a deep sleeper, **nothing** would wake her! Bella also produced a lot of wee during the night and was completely sodden by the morning.

Mum looked on the internet for information on bedwetting and also found out that for some children a natural hormone called Vasopressin doesn't always start working until some children are a bit older. This hormone reduces the amount of wee made at night.

Bella's mum wanted to help, as she knew how much this trip meant to Bella, so she made an appointment at the doctors.

The doctor explained that a bedwetting alarm could help Bella. The alarm goes off when the bladder starts to empty and would help to wake Bella so she can go to the toilet.

But because Bella was going away to Brownie camp soon, Desmopressin tablets were prescribed for a couple of weeks. Desmopressin is a medicine that does what the hormone Vasopressin should do.

The GP gave Bella 2 weeks supply of Desmopressin to try before she went on camp as there is no guarantee that it works for every child.

Bella tried the Desmopressin before she went on camp and it worked for her, so all her worries about sleeping away from home have gone. With a new found confidence, Bella can stay dry overnight.

When she comes back from the camp Bella can start to use the alarm. Mum said that she would buy an alarm for Bella to start using at home.

Bella gave Mum a big hug.

Edward's Story

Hello I'm Edward, I regularly poo in my pants and can't help it. I've tried to stop but it just comes out when it wants! My Mum gets very upset as she says I'm old enough to know better. I'm feeling fed up with it happening.

When I was in the reception class, they didn't seem to be too concerned when I had a pooing accident. I was taken to the toilets, helped to get clean and given clean pants and trousers to wear for the rest of the day.

This kept happening and mum took me to see the doctor.

The doctor explained that this is what is called soiling and it's often linked to constipation. If you don't poo regularly, the bowel can get full up with large dry poos that are too hard to pass. Soiling happens when the soft poo leaks around the hard lump as it's blocking the way out. This can happen a lot of times a day without you knowing.

The treatment is usually medicine to keep the poos regular and soft so it makes them nice and easy to push out. Also, sitting on the toilet for a poo at about the same time every day helps your body get used to pooing regularly.

Me and Mum were asked to work on me eating more healthy foods and because I didn't drink water throughout the day I needed to drink quite a bit more.

All of this helped me get into a better toileting routine and as I take my time when I need a poo, my constipation is now under control.

Katie's Story – aged 13

Katie is 13 years old and loves dancing and riding. Her mum kept finding wet pants hidden in the wardrobe when she tidied Katie's bedroom and Katie just pretended she didn't know anything about them.

Every day when Katie came home from school her pants were wet, but she didn't want to talk about it and was fed up with the questions every time her mum cleaned her room. The wetting always happened at school even though Katie tried really hard not to drink too much so that she didn't need the toilet.

Finally her mum explained kindly that this situation could not go on and suggested that they tell the doctor. Katie was a bit upset but relieved that her mum wanted to help her. Ignoring the problem was the only way that Katie could deal with it in the beginning. Now it was time to do something about it.

The doctor understood what was happening and said that he had seen lots of girls and boys with the same sort of problem. He said that there are physical reasons why daytime wetting happens and it wasn't her fault. This was great to know, because Katie had once heard her mum say that the wetting might be happening because she was being lazy.

Katie had to wee in a jar so that the urine sample could be tested for infection, as this can be one of the reasons for wetting in the day. Katie was then offered an appointment with her school nurse at a clinic especially for wetting problems. The appointment was after school at the local health centre so that there was no need to miss school or tell anyone where she was going. She had been given a chart to record all drinks, wees done in the toilet and how often she had damp pants. This would help the nurse to assess the problem when she saw her.

Before leaving the surgery, the doctor gave Katie a leaflet from ERIC about daytime wetting. She was really surprised to read that it was helpful to drink more during the day (6-8 glasses a day!) as this helps the problem by filling the bladder up and helping it to hold more urine. It was also important to make sure she goes to the toilet regularly (at

break and lunchtime) rather than waiting to feel the urge to go. These were positive things that Katie could start to do straight away to help the problem.

Katie promised her Mum that she would not hide her wet pants any more. They agreed that any wet pants would be put straight into a special washing basket as soon as she changed.

Katie started to drink more water during the day and visited the toilet at regular intervals. By the time she saw the school nurse at the clinic, she wasn't having as many accidents in the day and because she had spoken to her Mum and knew where to put her wet pants, she didn't need to hide them or pretend that nothing was wrong. Katie felt much happier and confident that she would soon be dry during the day.

Lucy's Story - aged 8

Hey how fantastic is this!!! I've just had 14 dry nights, so I'm going to put my bedwetting alarm away and see if I can wake up all on my own in the night if I need a wee!

Before I had my alarm I didn't wake up at night and the bed was wet when I woke in the morning. Dad tried taking me to the loo before he went to bed, but most of the time, although I did a wee, I was wet again by the morning.

Dad did a bit of research on the internet and ordered a body-worn alarm for me, They have a small "noise box" which you clip onto your pyjamas by your collar bone and a sensor which is clipped to your pants. As soon as you do a little bit of wee, it wets the sensor and the alarm wakes you to allow you to finish your wee on the loo.

It was difficult to use at first as I was so sleepy, but dad helped me. Dad did say that sometimes when I get over tired, it might not be a bad idea to use my alarm again, just to make sure I wake up!

Yeah, not a bad idea!

Sasha's Story

Hi I'm Sasha, when I was around 9 years old I had constipation - but it was tough diagnosing it. I suddenly started pooing in my pants, the worse thing was I couldn't stop it. I lost my appetite and became very lethargic and had such bad pains in my tummy.

I had quite a few accidents in school. It was so embarrassing but luckily for me my teacher was very understanding and made an appointment for Mum and I to have a chat with the school nurse.

The school nurse was great, she reassured me that lots of children of all ages get constipation and said that if I didn't go to poo at least 3 times a week the bowel will fill-up with very large poos. The longer they stay in the bowel the drier and harder they become and will get more and more painful to pass.

She explained that I had what is called soiling. What happens is that as children move

around the poo runs out and leaks or lumps break off and pop out in your pants without you knowing. The rectum becomes over stretched, so you temporarily lose the sensation of when you need to poo. The rectum will gradually shrink back to normal when the constipation clears up but it can take a long time.

We were advised to make an appointment with our doctor to discuss medication and the doctor gave Mum a prescription for some medicine which keeps the poo soft and makes it easy to poo again. The Doctor talked about how important it is to drink well throughout the day and eat a healthy diet. He said that sometimes children get into the habit of holding on to their poo when they are constipated as the poo can get hard and painful to pass. Eventually new poo will just overflow and the child will soil their pants without being able to stop it.

I had to stay on my medication for 3 years! Now I'm 13 I know exactly what to do to stop myself being constipated again.