

Experts call for greater understanding of ‘bedwetting’ as a medical condition

- Bedwetting, also known as enuresis, is an uncontrollable leakage of urine while asleep¹
- Bedwetting is common in children, with approximately 5–10% of 7-year-olds regularly wetting their beds and the problem may persist into teenage and adulthood²
- In most cases, bedwetting is a complex medical condition caused by over-production of urine at night or reduced capacity of the bladder, which can impact a child’s overall self-esteem, emotional well-being and day time functioning^{1,3}

28th May 2019 – Recent survey findings highlighted there are misconceptions underlying bedwetting, a condition that is under-recognised and misunderstood by society and healthcare professionals.^{3,4} A frequent misconception of bedwetting is that the cause is psychological, rather than having a multifactorial pathophysiological basis.^{1,4} Furthermore, the survey revealed that not only parents but also health care providers share this misconception and treatment was not necessarily consistent with guidelines.⁴

“For physicians to effectively treat bedwetting, any existing behavioural issues must be managed as a separate condition,” said Dr. Michal Maternik, Department of Urology, Division of Paediatric Urology, Medical University of Gdansk, Poland. “The survey findings highlight the need for new educational initiatives to optimise the understanding of bedwetting and provision of care amongst the medical community, parents and the public.”

Bedwetting can lead to feelings of shame and low self-esteem, preventing many patients from seeking treatment.^{3,4} According to the new survey, patients and their respected caregivers reported bedwetting to be associated with behavioural difficulties including, ‘sustaining attention’ (28%), ‘maintaining attention at school’ (29%), and sleeping difficulties (21%) resulting in repercussions on school performance.⁴ These consequences are often prolonged as many parents seek lifestyle changes first and nearly half of them do not seek help in children five years or older.⁴

“For decades, bedwetting was considered as a simple condition that would resolve spontaneously,” said Professor Serdar Tekgül at the Department of Urology at Hacettepe University, Turkey. “Bedwetting is now regarded as a complex disorder involving several factors such as bladder dysfunction, and the over-production of urine at night”.

The survey was completed by physicians and patients in Alpe-Adria, Italy, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Slovakia on their understanding of the medical condition, its impact on the lives of patients and the prevalence of comorbidities.⁴

About Bedwetting

Bedwetting, also known as enuresis, is an uncontrollable leakage of urine while asleep in children from aged 5 years.¹ In most cases it is caused by over-production of urine at night or reduced capacity of the bladder.² An inability to wake up can be another cause.²

Bedwetting does not have a psychological cause.¹ Bedwetting is a common childhood medical condition, with approximately 5–10% of 7 year-olds regularly wetting their beds and the problem may persist into teenage and adulthood.²

About World Bedwetting Day

World Bedwetting Day was initiated to raise awareness among the public and healthcare professionals that bedwetting is a common medical condition that can and should be treated. World Bedwetting Day 2019 will take place on 28th May 2019 and occurs on the last Tuesday of May each year. The theme is: '*Time to Take Action*', in recognition that much more can be done to diagnose and treat those children who suffer from bedwetting.

For more information please visit www.worldbedwettingday.com.

About the World Bedwetting Day Steering Committee

The World Bedwetting Day Steering Committee brings together experts from across the globe to support this initiative and consists of the International Children's Continence Society (ICCS), the European Society of Paediatric Urology (ESPU), the Asia Pacific Association of Paediatric Urology (APAPU), the International Paediatric Nephrology Association (IPNA), the European Society of Paediatric Nephrology (ESPN), the Sociedad Iberoamericana de Urologia Paediatrica (SIUP), the North American Paediatric Urology Societies, ERIC (The Children's Bowel & Bladder Charity) and Bladder & Bowel UK. The initiative is supported by Ferring Pharmaceuticals.

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¹ Theunis M et al. Self-Image and Performance in Children with Nocturnal Enuresis. *European Urology*. 2002; 41:660-667

² Nevés T. Nocturnal enuresis—theoretic background and practical guidelines. *Pediatr Nephrol*. 2011; 26:1207–1214

³ Vande Walle J et al, Practical consensus guidelines for the management of enuresis. *Eur J Pediatr* 2012;171:971-983

⁴ Maternik. Understanding of and misconceptions around monosymptomatic nocturnal enuresis: findings from patient and physician surveys. *Journal of Pediatric Urology* 2018