

# The patient perspective: a day in the life of a child with bedwetting

7.00 am

- Leon wakes with the same cold, sticky and uncomfortable feeling that he has had every morning for as long as he can remember: his wet bed makes him sad and frustrated. He knows that his bedwetting worries his mother and causes her more work. He has sometimes pretended to be dry to avoid disappointing her.

7.20 am

- Leon takes his wet bedding to the kitchen, where his mother reminds him to drink a glass of water with his breakfast. Once the washing is in the machine his mother goes upstairs to remake the bed. She is anxious about how Leon will feel when he gets invited to his friend's sleepover. How will they manage to keep the wetting secret if he does go?

8.15 am

- It is time to go to school. Leon has his water bottle in his bag and a reminder from his mum to drink it all and use the toilet at break time. He runs off, pretending not to have heard.

2.00 pm

- Leon and his mother arrive for their first appointment at the children's clinic. They explain that he has been wet almost every night since toilet training. They have tried reducing daytime drinks and waking him at night, but the school nurse had explained that Leon should have a water-based drink every two hours during the day and then go to the toilet and that his parents should not wake him at night. Leon does not eat, drink or use any screens for an hour before bed and goes to the toilet just before turning the light off. He is not constipated and does not have any problems with his bladder in the day but is very wet every morning.
- Leon's mother tells the nurse that she is worried that he is missing out, and she is frightened that his friends will find out and tease him. The time and expense of additional washing and bedding is difficult and she admits to getting frustrated with Leon at times.
- Leon feels shy and embarrassed but describes how he feels different from his friends and hates wearing disposable pants for bed, as they are for babies. Nothing he does makes the wetting any better and the doctor said he would grow out of it, so he does not understand why his mother nags him about drinking and going to the toilet.
- The nurse explains to Leon and his mother what causes bedwetting and talks about how what they are doing can help. She also explains about treatment with alarms and desmopressin. Leon decides to try an alarm first.

8.00 pm

- Leon's mother helps him to put on the bedwetting alarm they have been leant. They make sure it is working before he settles to sleep.

11.30 pm

- Leon's bedwetting alarm wakes his mother up. She wakes Leon who goes to the toilet and changes into dry pyjamas, before helping his mother to change the wet sheets.
- They are both tired when Leon gets back into bed but are hopeful. They now know that if Leon does not become dry within a few weeks, he can try desmopressin and that other treatment may be possible as well. Leon's mother feels that the nurse understood and will give them the support they need.

