

THE NAFC GUIDE TO HOME HYGIENE

Skin Care • Laundry • Bedding • Odor Control



Dry Night Solutions is a joint program between HDIS and NAFC.

This program is designed to provide useful, relevant answers to the most common questions about bedwetting. For more information and to order your kit today, call 855-266-1112. When ordering, use promo code: 018000.

KEEPING EVERYTHING CLEAN

The practice of good hygiene when treating a bedwetting condition is absolutely essential for the physical and emotional well-being of everyone involved. Those with the condition are at risk for skin damage as well as lower self-esteem, while those who are responsible for home cleanliness have challenges maintaining a clean, healthy living environment.

This brochure will focus on the two main areas of concern when it comes to hygiene for the treatment of bedwetting: Proper skincare and effective cleaning procedures.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER SKINCARE

The acids and other components of urine can be irritating to the skin – particularly the sensitive skin in the areas most likely to get wet. It's not uncommon for people to develop redness, peeling and sores – and when wet skin rubs against clothing or adult absorbent underwear, scrapes or scratches are often formed at the point of contact. This is made worse by the fact that the germs that ordinarily live on skin can actually interact with urine to create ammonia, which can be especially damaging.

Any type of irritation, sore or cut should be addressed quickly or it can lead to infection. In addition to the bacterial and viral infections that most of us normally associate with open-skin injuries, yeast and fungal infections can be a serious problem for those with incontinence, as well. That's because urine can affect the skin's pH level, and yeast infections like candidiasis and fungal infections like jock itch thrive in that environment.

It may also seem ironic that another skin condition often associated with bedwetting is xerosis, or abnormally dry skin. However, it's a very real consequence of the condition. Xerosis is caused by a decrease in the protective oils that coat the skin, and those oils are sensitive to many environmental factors, including the overexposure to moisture.



It's important to remember that there is no reason why anyone should have to wake up wet.

THE KEYS TO HEALTHY SKIN

It's always better to prevent a problem than to cure one, and that's especially true when skincare is concerned. The first step towards keeping skin healthy in someone with a bedwetting condition is to put in place safeguards that will help keep the skin dry. This means:

Finding quality absorbent products –

Pads and absorbent underwear come in direct contact with the skin and stay there all night, so it's essential that they thoroughly lock moisture away. When choosing an absorbent product, look for something that has good wicking ability, meaning that it quickly and fully moves moisture to the product's core. That way it won't be close enough to the skin to cause ongoing irritation. Also note that most products are available to address light, medium or heavy volume, so you can find the one that's right for any degree of bedwetting.

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Getting a good fit – Poor fit is one of the leading causes of wet skin and wet beds. Don't naturally assume that bigger is better – the fit should be appropriate for each person's shape and size. Too snug and it can pinch, causing irritation and creating an environment for sores and infection. Too loose and liquid can leak out before it's fully absorbed, negating the value of the pad or absorbent underwear in the first place.



Addressing accidents quickly – The sooner wet absorbent underwear and bedding are changed, the better. This is another reason why finding a good fitting, properly absorbent product is important: many people are reluctant to change protective undergarments frequently because of the expense involved, and they'll wind up using a soiled item for longer than they should. In the long run, it's far more cost effective – and significantly healthier – to buy and use products that do the job right when they're supposed to, and change them out for fresh ones as the need arises.

Proper washing technique – Avoid ordinary bar soaps and antibacterial soaps for skincare in sensitive areas. They have a tendency to dry the skin and raise its pH, both of which can worsen existing skin conditions.

RESTORING SKIN HEALTH

Once a skin condition has started to appear, it's important to address it as quickly as possible. Untreated or worsening skin conditions can produce significant discomfort, lead towards broader infections that pose a grave health risk and seriously degrade quality of life.

Fortunately, there are a number of products available today which have been proven to offer fast and effective relief for a broad number of the skin conditions associated with bedwetting. It's important to note, however, that an existing infection shouldn't be treated without medical guidance – consult a physician if an infection is swollen, warm to the touch or discharging any fluid.

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is a tremendous variety of moisturizers available, including many with scents, additional nutrients and other ingredients. Some of these may be beneficial, but others may produce unwanted reactions or allergic responses.

Moisture barrier creams/ointments – Designed to provide a protective coating for the skin, keeping moisture out. They typically contain ingredients that soothe irritation and moisturizers to restore skin health.

Antifungal treatments – Used to treat and prevent fungal infections, these come in a range of forms – creams, ointments, sprays, and more. Although there are many over-the-counter choices available, prescription-only medicines are often required to treat serious or stubborn infections, and these may often be combined with other medicines, including steroids.

Personal cleansing washcloths – These disposable wipes replace soap and water, providing a hygienic cleansing solution that nourishes the skin rather than drying it out. Look for brands that contain moisturizing cream, aloe or other components for added comfort and rehydration.

InterDry sheets – These are intended to be used in skin folds and other places where skin contacts skin. Those contact points create an environment that's ripe for trapping moisture and growing bacteria, and these sheets offer an effective way to manage wetness, odor and inflammation.

No-rinse body wash – Today's gentle, no-rinse cleaners are formulated to be effective even in sensitive areas. They moisturize while they clean and do an outstanding job at eliminating odors.

Moisturizing creams – For use when dry skin is the primary concern. While these can be excellent components of a skin care routine, make sure to choose a product that isn't unintentionally irritating – there



EFFECTIVE HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

While many of us think of cleanliness as good in-and-of itself, there are some very particular reasons why it's especially important to be diligent when cleaning the living space for someone with a bedwetting condition:

Elimination of irritants – Rapid and thorough treatment of bedding, clothing and other items that come in contact with the skin reduces the opportunity for acids and other irritants to do damage.

Odor removal – Odor is one of the most unpleasant aspects of bedwetting, but there are a number of products and methods that can reduce odor significantly – or eliminate it entirely.

Self-esteem enhancement – Mess and odor are very noticeable signs of a condition that already makes many people feel self-conscious. By eliminating these, you're going a long way towards helping sufferers feel better about themselves and improving their quality of life.

BEFORE YOU CLEAN

It's important to remember that there is no reason why anyone should have to wake up to wet clothing or bedding – the selection of absorbent products, medical treatments and behavioral therapies is so good today that there is almost certainly a solution available for everybody.



If it turns out that you're experiencing wet mornings, turn first to the NAFC's booklet "Your Guide to Good Nights and Great Mornings" for more information about how to avoid the need to clean in the first place.

HOW TO CLEAN

That being said, cleaning is a reality that you may have to deal with. And while cleaning may be a chore, bedwetting shouldn't make it an unmanageable one. The simple steps below outline how you can get more satisfying results with less effort, and that's something everyone can be happy about.

Cleaning Sheets and Other Bedding

1. Remove soiled items from the bed as quickly as possible – the longer it remains on the bed, the longer it has an opportunity to contaminate the mattress, which can be a challenge to clean in its own right and also a source of lasting odor.
2. Flush soiled areas immediately with water or club soda.
3. Soak the stain in a solution of 1 quart warm water, ½ teaspoon liquid detergent and 1 tablespoon ammonia for 30 minutes.
4. Rinse well with water.
5. Wash as you normally would.

Cleaning Mattresses

1. Strip and clean bedding as described above.
2. Blot up extra moisture from mattress fabric with a dry cloth or paper towels.
3. Sprinkle baking soda on the affected area to absorb remaining moisture.
4. Spray the affected area either with a solution of 1 part vinegar to 1 part water or a solution made from a commercial biological cleaning product (such as Persil Bio or Biokleen laundry detergent). Let sit for 5 minutes.
5. Repeat steps 2 and 3. Let sit for 3 or more hours to allow the baking soda to absorb remaining moisture and odor.
6. Vacuum the remaining baking powder.



Cleaning Furniture

There are a number of products on the market that have been developed specifically to eliminate urine stains and odors. Many of these work by using enzymes to treat the affected area at the chemical level. Always make sure to follow manufacturer's instructions

and test products on an inconspicuous area to ensure that it does not damage fabric or remove colors.

Furniture Protectors

There are a number of barrier products available to cover furniture and prevent accidents from getting into upholstery or mattresses at all. For a detailed list of choices, please refer to the *NAFC Absorbent Product Guide*.

Disposable Bag Systems

Odor isn't only associated with soiled bedding and furniture – adult absorbent briefs and other absorbent products can also be sources of unpleasant smells. Automated bagging systems are a great way to deal with these products, securing them in bags for odor free disposal. The *NAFC Absorbent Product Guide* contains a list of available systems.

**The NAFC Absorbent
Product Guide is
available for more
details at
www.nafc.org**

FINDING HELP

There's never a better time than right now to start doing something about a bedwetting problem. There are thousands and thousands of physicians and other medical professionals across the country who can help you

evaluate your condition and identify approaches that are likely to do the most good.

And don't be shy about it, either. This is a condition that effects countless people across America, so you can be certain that a qualified physician has seen it all before. If you don't already have a general practitioner who can refer you to a specialist, you can find one online at www.NAFC.org/find-a-doctor.



When you go, you'll discover that there's no shame in bedwetting. You'll probably be asked to take a few tests, including a physical examination, urine tests, urologic exams and perhaps a neurological evaluation. Your physician will do a thorough job to make sure that the root causes of your condition are identified, and you'll be pleased to discover all the solutions that are available to make every night a dry night.

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To help you have the most productive conversation possible with your physician, please refer to the NAFC's "How to Talk with Your Doctor About Bedwetting" guide.



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