

Information sheet for parents/guardians

How to get the best out of enuresis treatment with an alarm

Types of alarm

There are two types of alarm: the **body worn** alarm and the **single mat** alarm. There are manufacturers' variations to these basic designs, such as **multiple tone** or **additional vibration**.

How the alarms work

The alarms work in two ways:

1. They wake the child up so they can go to the toilet to finish 'weeing'
2. They startle the child, which causes the muscles surrounding the urethra to tighten and stop the 'weeing'.

These combined reactions teach the brain to tell the bladder to hold on until the child wakes or goes to the toilet. Eventually, the brain learns to do this without an alarm.

With both alarms, it is important that the child empties their bladder before going to bed/sleep.

Correct use of body worn alarm AT NIGHT

- The lead should go inside the pyjama top (avoids getting caught by the arms)
- The alarm should be pinned to the night wear on upper chest so easy to turn off and avoid getting wet as this may disable the alarm
- The detection plate goes between two pairs of pants for boys (not boxer shorts) and girls.
- Parents should go to the child when the alarm sounds and wake the child if necessary. Parents should let the child turn off the alarm by drying the sensor and pressing button on alarm.

Correct use of mat alarm

(See separate product information sheet.)

- Your child should sleep naked below their waist
- Place a towel on top of the foil mat to help prevent excess perspiration, which could trigger the alarm. However, should this occur, you should still encourage your child to go to the toilet on waking
- The foil mat should be placed shiny side up under a sheet
- The alarm should be dried and switched back on after wetting.

Safety

- The alarms should be kept away from young children
- The mat alarm should be turned off in the morning.

Care of alarms

- The detection plate or foil mat should be wiped each morning with a warm soapy cloth
- The foil should also be straightened to avoid damage to circuit by creasing, which will falsely trigger the alarm
- Avoid using nylon sheets as these can increase sweating and trigger the alarms
- Try using sheets and blankets if a duvet regularly ends up between your child and the sensor, or if a duvet proves to be too hot
- False alarms can be caused by dry unlaundered sheets as stale urine and salt from perspiration can trigger the alarms.

Trouble shooting

- If your child does not respond to the alarm, changing the make or model or tone on the variable alarm may help
- Placing the alarm in a marble-filled biscuit tin may also help to wake or startle your child (Mat Alarm only)
- If the alarm does not sound when your child wees, check it is turned on and also check the batteries are working.

Monitoring/using the alarms

The size of the wet patch should be monitored and documented on a progress chart for evaluation (chart to be chosen by your child).

Over-learning

- This is a method of 'loading' the bladder by increasing drinking, with the intention of increasing the bladder's capacity to hold increasing volumes and improve waking to full bladder signals
- This method can be undertaken alongside an alarm system but NOT with **Desmomelts or Desmopression tablets.**

If you have any queries please contact your Enuresis Service.