Background and Aims

A group of children suffering from Nocturnal Enuresis (NE) does not respond completely to current therapies. Bedwetting became unacceptable for numerous parents, to the point of blaming their children and adopting punitive means of coping. Parental corporal punishment often occurs in association with other discipline techniques such as time-out, withdrawal of privileges and verbally and physically violent behaviors.

The aim of this study is to investigate how the punishments in enuretic children can influence therapy response.

Methods

We administered a questionnaire to 218 enuretic children and their families at the end of the clinical evaluation.

Results

The questionnaires show that 12.4% (27/218) of enuretic children have been punished at least once. Admonishment has been used in 70.4% (19/27) of cases, depriving of sleep in 40.7% (11/27) of cases, mildly beating in 11.1% (3/27) of cases, leaving the child wet in 3.7% (1/27) of cases and other methods in 7.4% (2/27) of cases. Only 40.7% of punished children and 59.2% of not punished children attained full or partial response in terms of decreased number of wet nights.

Conclusion

The therapy of enuresis (behavioral and/or medicinal) depends on single patient, his/her family and compliance of both. Enuretic children should be made aware of the disease and of their active role in the healing process. Similarly parents should be apprised of the adverse effect of punishment on child development.