



Kapa'a Pediatrics, LLC

## **Withholding Behaviors (Dysfunctional Elimination Syndrome)**

Abnormal pattern of urination where the urinary tract is not working correctly. Although there are many areas along the urinary tract where problems can arise, this handout only focuses on bladder spasm that occurs from either withholding behavior or constipation.

Normally, when the bladder expands and stretches with urine it sends a message to the brain that it is time to urinate. If a child withholds their urine for an extended period, the bladder will lose its ability to accurately tell the brain when it is time to urinate because it is so stretched. It also has a hard time completely emptying. Constipation, large amounts of stool in the colon which is right next to the bladder, can put pressure on the bladder giving it the sense that it is full, and hence the sensation of a constantly full bladder.

In young children, >3 years of age, increased frequency **WITHOUT** fever and **WITHOUT** dysuria (pain with urination) is most likely to have dysfunctional elimination.

### **Treatment:**

- 1) Constipation: if your child is constipated then refer to the constipation handout for treatment guidelines.
- 2) Withholding Behavior: requires bladder retraining. Set a strict voiding schedule every 2 hours for your child to urinate regardless of if they need to void or not. Encourage them to fully relax and void as much as they can for a minute. Usually it only takes 2-3 days for the bladder to regain normal function, but sometimes it can take up to 14 days. If your child attends school then we can write a note to the teacher to help the child stay on voiding schedule.

### **When to call:**

- 1) Any fever or pain with urination suggests that urinary tract infection is probably the cause of the frequent urination and this would need antibiotics as soon as possible.
- 2) If there is no improvement in 3 days please call us to review the history or come in for a urine sample to make sure that we are not missing anything.

\*\*\* Patient handouts created by Kapa'a Pediatrics are intended to give parents the most common and pertinent facts about a certain issue. If there is ever any concern that your child was given an incorrect diagnosis or is not following the usual expected course for an illness please call us to speak with a physician. (808) 634-8011 \*\*\*