



From the desk of Dr Harry

Periodic Fever Adenopathy Pharyngitis Aphthous (PFAPA)

Harry Zehnirith MBBS (HON) FRACP

Does your child have unexplained episodes of fever, enlarged neck glands, with or without mouth ulcers and sore throat?

Does it occur almost predictably every 3 or 4 weeks and do not respond to antibiotics?

Does your doctor find it difficult to explain the recurrent episodes, which may have been periodically interrupting your child's life for months, even years?

The condition may very well be PFAPA - Periodic Fever Adenopathy Pharyngitis Aphthous mouth ulcers (adenopathy refers to neck gland enlargement). The cause of the disorder is thought to be related to an *immune response* to chronic tonsillar inflammation.

I have treated quite a few of these children, and they improve dramatically with one or two doses of oral steroids if given early in the episode. All of the children I have seen have responded positively long term to tonsillectomy, with no further episodes. The tonsillectomy response rate is perhaps not as favourable for other pediatricians, as mentioned in an August 2009 Journal of Paediatrics article:

<http://download.journals.elsevierhealth.com/pdfs/journals/0022-3476/PIIS0022347609005836.pdf>

for more information:

<http://www.thedoctorsdoctor.com/diseases/pfapa.htm>

<http://www.merck.com/mmpe/sec19/ch297/ch297g.html>

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