

A B C D E F G Children's Health

The Importance Of A Healthy Curiosity

(NAPSA)—When it comes to your child's health, doctors say don't be afraid to ask questions. If your questions include "Why does my child keep getting sick?" or "Why aren't antibiotics working?" your child may have a condition called Primary Immunodeficiency (PI).

PI is a genetic disorder that affects the immune system, leaving the body unable to effectively fight infection. The condition is found in males and females of all ages, but most frequently presents itself early in life.

Currently, there are at least half a million children diagnosed with a PI disease and experts estimate that another half million are undiagnosed. In fact, PI affects more children than childhood leukemia and lymphoma combined.

The good news is that with early detection, most immune deficiencies can be treated, allowing for a more normal, healthy life. How do you know if your child may have PI? According to the Jeffrey Modell Foundation, parents should be alert for the following warning signs:

- Eight or more new ear infections within one year.
- Two or more serious sinus infections within one year.
- Two or more months on antibiotics with little effect.
- Two or more pneumonias within one year.



Learning the symptoms of PI can help parents protect their children.

- Failure of an infant to gain weight or grow normally.
- Recurrent deep skin or organ abscesses.
- Persistent thrush in the mouth or elsewhere on the skin after age one.
- Need for intravenous antibiotics to clear infections.
- Two or more deep-seated infections.
- A family history of PI.

If your child suffers from chronic or recurring illnesses, you should keep asking questions. For more information or referral to a specialized center in your area, call the Jeffrey Modell Foundation at 1-800-JEFF-844 or visit their Web site at www.jmfworld.org.