

*“Funny, you don’t
look sick”*



An abbreviated guide
to a non-contagious condition

Primary Immunodeficiency Disease



*I've heard every excuse
in the book*

“I have to be absent because ____.”

But when someone tells you it's because they have a primary immunodeficiency disease (PI), take it seriously. Living with PI requires special considerations and treatment, even though that person may look healthy, and be healthy.

Most people are not familiar with PI, including teachers, employers, even the friends and relatives of those who have it. And because PI is not very common, it is mostly doctors who specialize in this kind of condition who really know a lot about it. PI is an ongoing condition that, when controlled, allows a person to lead a nearly normal life. The more you know, the more you'll understand the needs of your students, friends, or employees with PI.

PI is not AIDS:

- There is no connection between PI and AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome)
- PI is not contagious. It is caused by problems inside a person's own immune system, so you can't catch it from someone else

What is PI?

- PI is genetic
- Part of the immune system is missing or doesn't work the way it should
 - The body does not produce enough antibodies, so it can't fight off infections
- People with PI are more susceptible to viruses or bacteria
 - A simple cold can lead to complications

PI can be controlled:

- There are advanced therapies that can help people with PI maintain their health and get on with their lives
- IGIV infusions provide the antibodies needed to help the body fight off infections
 - To control PI, regularly scheduled absences from work or school may be required to receive IGIV therapy
 - Commonsense precautions, such as frequent hand washing, are also important

What you can do to help:

- When there is an outbreak of flu, bronchitis or any other infection at work or at school:
 - Inform employees or students with PI
 - Arrange for them to work or learn at home
- If your school or company has a vaccination program, those with PI should be informed in advance and check with their doctor before participating
- When a student or employee needs a little time off to visit a doctor or receive therapy, work out a schedule. Without these treatments they will get sick, *even though they may look well and be healthy at the moment*

Help the people you know who have PI to stay healthy.

To learn more, visit
www.talecris.com



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Reference: Immune Deficiency Foundation. *A Guide for School Personnel: Primary Immune Deficiency Diseases*. Buckley RH, ed. Towson, Md: Immune Deficiency Foundation; 2005.