

FEVER

APPROACH TO A CHILD WITH FEVER OF 1-2 WEEKS DURATION

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Abstract: *Fever is one of the common clinical symptoms seen in pediatric population diagnosed with an identified bacterial or viral infection. In several others, the fever may be prolonged for a longer duration commonly called fever of unknown origin (FUO). Common causes are infectious in nature such as viral, bacterial, fungal and parasitic. Non-infectious causes are immune-mediated and granulomatous diseases, periodic fever syndromes and autoinflammatory disorders and neoplasms. Important factors to be considered for diagnosis are periodicity of fever and associated signs and symptoms. When investigating prolonged fever, it is important to consider the age at onset, family history, duration of febrile episodes, length of the interval between episodes, associated symptoms and response to treatment. Along with case history data, a careful physical examination during and between febrile episodes may provide useful clues and guide laboratory investigations. A careful watch is mandatory in cases of prolonged fever because new signs and symptoms may appear over time which may help to approach the diagnosis.*

Keywords: *Fever of unknown origin, Fever etiology, Fever periodicity, Relapsing fever.*

Points to Remember

- *When investigating fever of 1-2 weeks, it is important to consider the age at onset, family history, travel history, exposure to animals, periodicity, associated symptoms and response to treatment.*
- *A careful physical examination during and between febrile episodes may provide useful clues and guide laboratory investigations.*
- *It is important to rule out the possibility of an infectious disease, the common ones being enteric fever, scrub typhus, malaria and leptospirosis.*
- *After excluding an infectious etiology, neoplastic, immune-mediated and autoinflammatory causes should be taken into consideration.*
- *Repeated clinical examinations are mandatory, as new signs and symptoms may appear over time which may give a clue to the likely diagnosis and help to choose the appropriate laboratory investigations.*

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