

Manchester United helped spot fan's rare condition

December 16 2011

Doctors in Manchester spotted a rare condition in a football fan after hearing about her unusual symptoms while watching her team Manchester United play.

They describe what happened in the [Christmas](#) issue published in the [British Medical Journal](#) today.

The 58 year old woman would suffer from episodes of [anxiety](#), palpitations, panic, light headedness, and a sense of impending doom towards the end of high-profile matches at Old Trafford, Manchester United's home ground.

[Symptoms](#) were particularly severe during crucial games when the outcome of the match was in question until the very last minute. In contrast, symptoms were barely noticeable when the opposition was from the lower reaches of the league.

This led [doctors](#) to diagnose Addisonian crisis - a life threatening manifestation of Addison's disease – in which the adrenal glands do not produce sufficient quantities of the stress hormone cortisol. This can lead to very low blood pressure and even coma.

Addison's disease is a difficult condition to diagnose because the main symptoms include fatigue, lethargy and low mood – symptoms often described by the 'healthy' general population and frequently reported in many other chronic conditions.

The authors say: "We believe that our patient was having difficulty mounting an appropriate physiological cortisol response during the big games and therefore we present this as the first description of Manchester United induced Addisonian crisis."

Treatment coincided with the start of the 2011/12 football season and the patient has managed to attend all games at Old Trafford without any adverse effects.

Luckily, the patient was on holiday for United's 6-1 defeat by local rivals Manchester City in October. But, by this time, doctors had fine-tuned her therapy and she has remained symptom-free during recent tense contests against Sunderland and FC Basel.

Two of her daily doses are taken at 3:30pm and 8:30pm; mid-way through afternoon and evening matches, respectively.

Provided by British Medical Journal

Citation: Manchester United helped spot fan's rare condition (2011, December 16) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-12-manchester-fan-rare-condition.html>

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