

Cystic Fibrosis: What It Means for You and Your Child

A diagnosis of cystic fibrosis, or CF, is life-changing.

But it's just one part of the fulfilling life your child can still have.

CF is a genetic disease that has no cure.

Sometimes, parents know they have the gene.

And sometimes they don't.

In either case, it's nobody's fault if your child has CF.

CF causes a problem with the balance of salt and water in the body.

And it creates a thick and sticky mucus that gets stuck in the lungs and the digestive system.

This can make it hard for your child to breathe and digest food.

And the mucus can trap bacteria.

That's why your child may get infections or develop serious problems over time, such as lung damage.

Daily medicines and preventive therapies can help clear mucus from the lungs, improve digestion, and prevent long-term problems.

New treatments for CF mean that people are living longer and are working, getting married, and having families.

There may be good days and bad days.

Your child may have different toilet habits than other kids, may cough more, and will probably get infections, even when you're doing everything you're supposed to do.

But, for the most part, your child will be able to do the same things as other kids: school, parties, sleepovers, sports, activities.

In fact, being active is one of the best things for a child with CF.

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As you adjust to having a child with CF, do your best to take things day by day.

Love your child where they're at right now, rather than fast-forward too far into the future.

It's common to want to know everything you can do to help your child that you love so much.

But you can't know it all right away.

Your care team is there to support you.

They'll teach you what you can do to help your child, so you can worry less.

The extra care you need to give your child will seem hard at first.

But you'll learn how to build it all into your daily routine.

Treatments today have made life with CF so much better than it was years ago.

Plus, kids are naturally tough, optimistic, and full of joy, and they can help you be that way too.