



## Cystic Fibrosis (CF)



### Overview

This is a disease that affects your mucus and sweat glands. It causes the mucus your body produces to be thick and sticky. In your lungs, sticky mucus can clog your airways. This makes it hard for you to breathe. It also provides a place for bacteria to grow. That can lead to frequent lung infections.

### Causes

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease that you inherit. You get it when both of your parents pass a copy of a specific defective gene to you. It isn't contagious, so you can't "catch" it like a cold. It doesn't spread between people.

### Symptoms

Cystic fibrosis affects the lungs, pancreas, liver, intestines, sinuses and sex organs. If you have it, you may have a lot of lung infections. You may cough and wheeze, and you may have shortness of breath. You may have trouble with your bowel movements. Children who have cystic fibrosis may have poor growth, even when they eat a good diet. Most men who have cystic fibrosis are infertile, but many can have children through assistive means.

### Treatment

Cystic fibrosis is treated with a combination of therapies. You can use an inflatable vibrating vest to help loosen and thin mucus in your lungs. You can use inhaled medicine to help clear your airways. And, you may take supplements when you eat to help your body absorb nutrients. Your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.

