

Cystic fibrosis and nutrition

Reviewed by SickKids Staff | Last updated: January 25, 2023

Infection control is important in limiting the spread of germs between people with cystic fibrosis.

Key points

- Avoid spending in-person time with other people with cystic fibrosis (CF) to prevent the spread of germs from one person with CF to another person with CF.
- Some ideas are provided to protect yourself and others from spreading germs.

Avoiding other people with cystic fibrosis (CF)

People with CF should not be around other people with CF in order to prevent the spread of lung infections from one person to another. Once a person becomes infected with a particular type of bacteria, it can be difficult to get rid of it. The bacteria can be spread through cough droplets or saliva on indirect surfaces from one infected person with CF to another person with CF and make them sick. For example, if someone touches something with germs already on it, such as a door handle, and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth. Germs can also be spread among people by sharing items like glasses or pencils from someone with CF to another person with CF. People with CF should stay at least 2 m (6 ft) away from other people with CF to reduce the chance that harmful bacteria can spread.

Activities to avoid

There are certain activities that people with CF should avoid. These include going into hot tubs and swimming in still water such as a pond. Also cleaning stables and animal enclosures should be avoided. However, weigh the risks and the benefits and speak with your CF team if you have concerns or questions.

What you can do to protect yourself and others?

- Be sure to maintain a distance of 6 feet or more from others with CF
- Throw away tissues immediately after use

- Always cover your mouth when you cough
- Avoid people who are sick whenever possible
- People with CF should avoid long, close physical contact with each other
- Do not share personal items such as cups, utensils, toys, personal devices, compressors and nebulizers with other CF patients
- Clean and disinfect your nebulizer and physiotherapy device daily (link to reusable nebs)
- Ask your health care provider if they have washed their hands and cleaned any equipment before they examine you
- Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:
 - after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose
 - throughout your clinic visit and as you leave clinic
 - before and after eating

To connect with others with CF, it would be safe to connect virtually online with them.

Please visit [Teens.AboutKidsHealth.ca](https://teens.aboutkidshealth.ca) for more health information.

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