

What is Cystic Fibrosis?



Accept the Challenge!

Cystic Fibrosis is a condition with which some babies are born. In fact, it is present from the moment of conception, that is, from the instant the father's sperm fertilises the mother's egg. It is not caused by any previous illness suffered by one of the parents or by anything that happened during the mother's pregnancy. It is non-contagious and affects a number of organs of the body.

Cystic Fibrosis is an [inherited disorder](#). A baby can only be born with the disease if both parents carry the abnormal gene. This is what is known as an 'autosomal recessive' inheritance. Normally the mucus in our bodies is thin and slippery and works as a lubricant. In CF, however, the mucus becomes very thick and sticky, blocking the tiny tubes and ducts of various organs. In approximately 90 per cent of patients the ducts in the pancreas are blocked, and so digestive enzymes produced by the pancreas are unable to flow into the digestive tract. Mucus may also block the tiny bronchial tubes in the lungs causing shortness of breath and a chronic cough.

Recurrent respiratory infections, and malabsorption due to pancreatic insufficiency are the major clinical manifestations of the condition.

Why is it called Cystic Fibrosis?

When the condition was first discovered, it was thought that the main effect was on the pancreas, an organ in the body which produces digestive juices. The pancreas in children with Cystic Fibrosis contains cysts and increased fibrous tissue, hence the term Cystic Fibrosis of the pancreas. It is now realised that the effects on the pancreas are only one aspect of the condition which is commonly termed Cystic Fibrosis or CF.

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Supporting people with CF to stay healthy via physical activities & sport

