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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to highlight the life changing benefits that exercise can have on people with Cystic Fibrosis (CF).

I have been working at Starship Children's Hospital for the last six years as the Senior Respiratory Physiotherapist, and a large part of this role includes the physiotherapy management of infants, children and adolescents with CF nationally. A large part of physiotherapy in CF is daily airway clearance techniques to prevent chest infections and over the last decade exercise has become a large factor in optimising health benefits for these children.

It is common knowledge that exercise is extremely beneficial to the general population. It reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, and some cancers (Riddoch and Boreham 2000). Exercise improves heart and lung function, aids in reducing stress, improves general well-being, cognitive functioning and aids weight loss and control (Shepherd 2000, King and Sean 2000).

The benefits of exercise in the CF population include those mentioned above but extend beyond this. Exercise promotes greater secretion clearance than at rest, and improves fitness levels and exercise tolerance (Cooper 1998). A CF person's level of fitness can also provide important prognostic information in terms of disease severity (Orenstein 2000) and improves lung function measures, which is directly related to improved survival (Moorcroft 1997).

Exercise is recommended by all physiotherapists and medical staff involved in the care of people with CF as an adjunct to their chest physiotherapy to improve overall quality of life and, in the long term, survival. Due to the overwhelming demands placed on families to keep these children well (ie prescription bills, travel to hospitals, one parent unable to work due to increased level of care), it becomes increasingly difficult to afford 'luxury' activities such as sports team fees, gym memberships, trampolines, dancing fees etc.

By using your Breath4CF during your Ironman event and raising money for exercise and CF, it will be making a difference for all people with CF around the country. It will prevent limitations to exercise, improve overall quality of life and survival.

I wish you the very best of luck.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Udy  
Senior Respiratory Physiotherapist  
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