

## Exercise in Cystic Fibrosis

Exercise can play a very valuable role in maintaining lung function and quality of life, as well as rehabilitation after exacerbations in CF. Exercise can have benefits beyond the obvious. It can make treatment more enjoyable, it makes you look and feel better, it can get other family members involved (siblings, grandparents, even friends!). Making airway clearance a habit from the time of diagnosis is important and exercise can be a way to complete your airway clearance and have some fun!

It's important to make sure the exercise is the right one for different age groups. Some ideas for the toddler/pre-school set would be:

- Jumping games- kids love to jump and jumping on a small trampoline or pillows can help loosen mucous as well as encourage deep breathing and coughing.
- Wheelbarrow races- have someone hold the ankles of the child and let them walk on their hands. This helps build upper body strength and exercises the muscles used in coughing and deep breathing.
- Running- running encourages deep breathing and increases cardiovascular fitness.
- Playground equipment- running and climbing use lots of different muscles keeping them in shape and stretched out. Just hanging from your hands on a climbing set can really be good for stretching muscles that may become tight from repeated coughing.

As your child gets older, team sports are a great way to stay in shape and achieve airway clearance at the same time. The benefit of team sports goes beyond competition and can help establish a sense of well-being. Also around this age kids can often really begin to use other techniques like huffing and autogenic drainage to supplement their physical activity.

As a child moves into adolescence and adulthood, our hope is that physical activity is a way of life and they will continue to pursue sport and exercise as valuable tools in their daily care. The goal is to keep lungs healthy and minimize damage caused by built up secretions that can develop into infection.

The benefits of regular exercise are so many, including:

Endurance

Muscle strength

Joint mobility

Good body awareness

Quality of life

Ability to fight infection

Feeling of well being

Leisure time activity

Good posture

Not to mention that family and friends can be involved in helping the CF patient maintain good lung health in a fun way, promoting a sense of normalcy and fitting in.

Your CF care team should be involved in deciding appropriate exercise as well as any potential limitations on an individual CF patient.