Weill Cornell Medicine

Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month

May is Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month

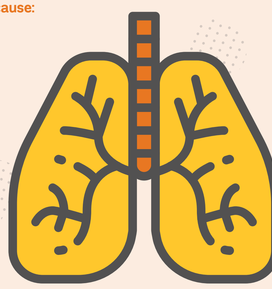
Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a hereditary disease that affects the lungs and digestion. Around 35,000 people in the United States have CF, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There is currently no cure for CF.

CF COMPLICATIONS

CF causes mucus in the body to become thick and sticky.

Due to the thicker mucus, CF can cause:

- Airway blockage
- Difficulty breathing
- Increased rate of infections
- Inflammation
- Lung damage
- Malnutrition
- Respiratory failure



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CF

Common signs and symptoms of CF include:

- Chronic cough, typically with thick mucus or blood
- Difficulty with bowel movements
- Frequent lung infections
- Male infertility
- Poor weight gain or growth in childhood
- Shortness of breath
- Very salty-tasting skin
- Wheezing

TREATMENT FOR CF

Some common treatment options for people who have CF include:

- Airway clearance therapy
- Antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medications
- Pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy
- Mucus thinning medication

CF AND TRAVELING

Living with CF shouldn't hold you back from traveling. When planning your next vacation, consider the following tips:

- If you take medication that needs to be refrigerated, call ahead to ensure your accommodations provide a refrigerator in their rooms.
- On that same note, also alert your airline that you'll need to keep your medication refrigerated while you're flying.
- Pack extra medication if your return home is delayed.
- Take note of any hospitals or CF clinic in the area you're staying in and keep their contact information handy.
- Talk to your primary care provider about a respirator or whether you should consider a COVID-19 booster.

If you're concerned you may have CF, consult with your provider today.

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