Cystic fibrosis *awareness*

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is an inherited disease that affects 70,000 people worldwide. People who have CF have a gene mutation. This gene mutation causes mucus in the body to become thick and sticky.

With CF, thick mucus in the lungs can cause infections and make it hard to breathe. The pancreas, which helps digest food, becomes clogged. Then the body can't absorb nutrients from food. This can cause malnutrition and poor growth. CF affects other organs, too.

CF AND GENETICS

People with CF have two copies of the CF gene. They get one copy from each parent. Both parents must have at least one copy of the CF gene.

People with only one copy of the CF gene are called carriers. They don't have the disease and may not know that they have the CF gene. Each time two CF carriers have a child, the chances are:

- 25 percent (1 in 4) the child will have CF
- 50 percent (1 in 2) the child will be a carrier but will not have CF
- 25 percent (1 in 4) the child will not be a carrier and will not have CF

People with CF can also pass copies of their CF genes to their children. If someone with CF and a CF carrier have a child together, the chances are:

- 50 percent (1 in 2) the child will be a carrier but will not have CF
- 50 percent (1 in 2) the child will have CF

GETTING TESTED FOR THE CF GENE

People who are considering pregnancy may wish to get a CF genetic test. This tells you if you have CF or if you could be a carrier. This test looks for the most common CF genes, but it doesn't test for all of them. If you're not sure if you need the test, ask your doctor. The decision to get CF testing is a personal one and is different for everyone.

LONGER LIVES FOR CF

There is no cure for CF. But with proper medical care, people with CF are living longer than ever before. Today, more than half of people who live with CF are over age 18.

Sources: Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, National Institutes of Health