CYSTIC FIBROSIS INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL GUIDELINES

Did you know?

People with cystic fibrosis (CF) should not be around other people with CF. This is to prevent the spread of lung infections from one person to another.

Simply put, there are bacteria in the environment that don't affect people without CF, but that can have serious, potentially fatal, effects on those who do have CF – and these bacteria can spread between people with CF.

Why do people with CF have lung infections?

CF causes thick, sticky mucus in the lungs, which encourages bacterial growth. People with CF have chronic lung infections with different types of bacteria. Once a person with CF becomes infected with a particular type of bacteria, it can be difficult or impossible to get rid of, due to their compromised immune system. Lung infection flare-ups are a leading cause of illness and death in people with CF.

How could infections spread among people with CF?

When people with CF get too close to each other, bacteria from one person's lungs can spread through saliva droplets to another person. This can cause the spread of infections, which can lead to lung damage and death.

How much distance should people with CF keep from others with CF?

People with CF should stay at least 6 feet away from other people with CF at all times. This reduces the chances that harmful bacteria will spread from one person with CF to another.

How many people with CF can be at an event?

Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for CF state that only one person with CF shall attend indoor events. For outdoor events – where air circulation is assumed to be better – the recommendation is that people with CF maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from other people with CF at all times.

Do these guidelines apply to someone who has had a lung or liver transplant?

Yes. Individuals with CF may continue to carry potentially dangerous bacteria within their upper airways following transplantation and can pass these infections on to other people with CF. In addition, transplant recipients have a suppressed immune system, which puts them at risk of becoming infected from others with CF. Therefore, to reduce person-to-person spread of infections, Cystic Fibrosis Canada recommends that *all* individuals with CF follow the Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines.

Where can I find more information?

For information on cystic fibrosis infection control guidelines, including a YouTube video with Wally Speckert, an individual living with CF, please visit: http://www.cysticfibrosis.ca/about-cf/living-with-cystic-fibrosis/infection-prevention-and-control.

For a copy of the full *Infection Prevention and Control Guideline for Cystic Fibrosis: 2013 Update* document, please visit: http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/676882