



Cystic Fibrosis (CF)

Family Fact Sheet

What is a positive newborn screen?

Newborn screening is done on tiny samples of blood taken from your baby's heel 24 to 36 hours after birth. Newborn screening tests for rare, hidden disorders that may affect your baby's health and development. The newborn screen suggests your baby might have a disorder called CF.

A positive newborn screen does not mean your baby has CF, but it does mean your baby needs more testing to know for sure.

Your baby's primary care provider will help you schedule a special test called a sweat test at a CF center. This test is usually done within one week after the positive newborn screen.

What is CF?

CF is a genetic disorder that is passed on (inherited) from parents to a child. The mother and father of an affected child carry a gene change that can cause CF. Parents usually do not have signs or symptoms, or even know they carry the gene change.

CF affects breathing and digestion (breaking down food).

A person with CF makes thick, sticky mucus that blocks the airways of the lungs, making it hard to breathe. This thick, sticky mucus can also make it harder for the body to break down (digest) food. In people with CF, the sweat glands also make very salty sweat.

What problems can CF cause?

CF is different for each child. Some children with CF have fewer health problems, while other children may have serious complications.

Children with CF may develop:

- Coughing and wheezing
- Lung infections
- Sinus problems
- Poor growth and weight gain
- Greasy or oily stools

What is the treatment for CF?

CF cannot be cured. CF symptoms can be treated. Treatment is life-long and can include:

- Healthy, high-calorie diet.
- Vitamins.
- Medications to help absorb more nutrients from food.
- Medications to prevent infection and help with breathing.
- Help clearing mucus from the lungs each day.

Children with CF should see their regular doctor and a doctor who specializes in CF. Prompt and careful treatment helps children with CF live the healthiest lives possible.

Children with CF can be seen in one of five CF centers in Michigan. The CF centers are in Ann Arbor, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Lansing.

Resources and Support

Michigan Newborn Screening
Nurse Consultant
Toll-free: 1-866-673-9939
newbornscreening@michigan.gov

Newborn Screening and Coordinating Program for Cystic Fibrosis at the University of Michigan
734-647-8938

Children's Special Health Care Services
Toll-free: 1-800-359-3722

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
www.cff.org