

## **INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS CANADA-HOSTED EVENTS & MEETINGS**

### **Introduction**

Balancing germ control with an active, productive life is important. The benefits of close contact must be weighed against the risks of infection – there are many uncertainties with respect to infection control. The following guidelines are intended to help reduce the spread of infections, and to help everyone stay healthier. For more information on infection control and hints on how you and your family can lower the risk of catching and spreading germs, see our *Infection Control Policy, Backgrounder, and Q & A Sheet* or contact your CF Clinic.

The following guidelines provide insight into Cystic Fibrosis Canada's Infection Control Policy as it relates to its meetings and events. These guidelines provide advice for people with CF on how to minimize their exposure to harmful bacteria and protect their health when taking part in outdoor events or attending indoor meetings and conferences.

These guidelines are to be strictly followed at all events organized by Cystic Fibrosis Canada and its volunteer chapters, associations and committees. Please ensure to update your chapter materials (e.g. websites, event invitations, notice of meetings) with the revised policy that is posted on Cystic Fibrosis Canada's website.

In general, anticipate possible situations that could bring people together, and avoid events held in confined spaces, where it is much harder to stay away from, or to avoid being close to other people with CF.

These guidelines also apply to those who have been transplanted, since there is still a risk of acquiring pathogens due to immunosuppression, and of transmitting pathogens from the CF cells that remain in the upper respiratory tract.

### **Guidelines**

#### **1. Outdoor events (e.g. Great Strides Walk)**

In an open air environment, there is less concern for person-to-person transmission of pathogens, but travelling with other people with CF in a car, or meeting them socially increases the level of risk.

##### **a. Guidelines for people with CF at outdoor events**

- Those with *B. cepacia* complex or MRSA should not attend any event where others with CF may be present.
- Others with CF may attend, at their own discretion, but should observe the following rules:
  - i. Follow normal infection control precautions (see Q & A Sheet);
  - ii. Do not travel to and from events with others with CF (unless they are siblings or parent and child with CF);

- iii. Avoid activities associated with events that encourage crowding – e.g. face-painting, jumpy castles, line-ups for food stations/bathrooms, group photos;
  - iv. Do not get in close proximity with others, while participating in the event, unless you are sure they do not have CF – try to maintain a distance of at least 3-feet at all times.
- Be aware that there may be other people with CF present at the event.
  - Think carefully before bringing very young children with CF to an event as they may be less aware/less vigilant about observing proper infection control practices.

**2. Indoor meetings and events** (e.g. Chapter Meetings, Board of Directors Meetings, AGM)  
Close contact between people with CF is much more likely to occur at indoor events, which increases the risk of cross infection. As such, the in-person meetings of the Adult CF Committee and Annual Education Day for CF, will be held in alternative formats to face-to-face.

**a. Guidelines for people with CF at indoor events or meetings**

- Those with *B. cepacia* or MRSA should not attend any event where others with CF may be present.
- Do not attend events or meetings held in enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces like small rooms, hotel rooms, or restaurants.
- Do not attend events or meetings where more than one person with CF may be in attendance.
- Do not attend CF camps/education programs/support groups for persons with CF.
- Think carefully before bringing very young children with CF to an event as they may be less aware/less vigilant about observing proper infection control practices.
- Be aware that there may be other people with CF present at the event.

Cystic Fibrosis Canada would like to emphasize that as an organization serving the CF community, we feel responsible to provide guidelines such as these. However, we are advocates for personal but **informed choice**. We appreciate your endeavours to follow these guidelines during any events/meetings organized by Cystic Fibrosis Canada or its volunteer chapters, associations and committees. We want to say clearly to adults and children with cystic fibrosis that you are valued members of our organization. To the extent your capacity to contribute is constrained, the whole CF effort in Canada is diminished. Cystic Fibrosis Canada is exploring all possible means of permitting your continued participation – short of personal attendance – in our events and meetings.