

Introducing new treatments and equipment

Along your CF journey, the CF team may introduce new treatments and equipment to help manage your child's CF. This could include exercises to assist with chest physiotherapy or adding nebuliser therapy to help with administering medicine. Your child may initially be a bit scared of new treatments but this is normal. Here are some tips for how you can make new treatments and equipment less daunting:

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Educate and demonstrate

- Explain to your child the *what, when, where, how, and why* of the new treatment and/or equipment. For example, *"This will help to get rid of the bugs and germs in your lungs so you can play and do fun things"*.
- Practice new treatments through play or modelling. For example, take turns placing the nebuliser mask over your face, your child's face and their teddy bear's face to gradually increase their familiarity and tolerance of the new treatment.
- Use a visual countdown timer so that your child knows when the treatment will finish (see examples in resource section).

2. Choice and control

Providing your child with choices when possible is likely to give them a sense of control.

- Allow your child to come up with a creative name for the treatment (e.g. nebbie or magic mist), and then continue to use this name when referring to it.

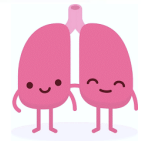
3. Exploration and play

- Provide opportunities for exploration of, and play with, the new equipment outside of treatment time.
- Decorate the new equipment (e.g. nebuliser machine) together to make it more child-friendly.
- Involve your child when setting up the equipment so that they become familiar and comfortable with it.

4. Problem solve

Finding out the underlying reasons for your child's behaviours will help you to appropriately address it. Ask yourself: *What's bothering my child? Is it the sight/sound/taste of the new treatment?*

- If your child dislikes the taste or the feeling of a dry throat, offer a sweet lolly or small sips of water before, or small sucks in between, treatment.
- If your child is concerned about the treatment getting into their eyes, try letting them wear sunglasses or goggles.
- Listening to music or watching your child's favourite TV show may help to distract them.



- Provide lots of specific positive praise for every achievement that your child makes (e.g. tolerates the mask for full duration of treatment – “*you did a great job doing your whole treatment*”). Some parents find it helpful to set up a reward system to use every day.

Additional resources: Introducing new treatments and equipment

- Ask your QCH Occupational Therapist for additional handouts, ideas or resources such as:
 - Social stories to help teach your child about the new treatment and its importance
 - Visual schedule templates i.e. *First → Then chart*
 - Other ideas and strategies to make CF treatments more fun for your child
- Here are some countdown timer apps that you might find helpful:

