



Daily routines and treatment

Following through with your child's recommended treatment is as important as brushing their teeth every day. We know that this may be difficult, both for you and your child, for a range of reasons:

- You may feel overwhelmed by the unpredictability of CF or the amount of treatments required.
- The difficulties in balancing a busy family lifestyle, changes in routine and multiple priorities.
- Your child may be becoming more independent and learning to say 'no'. This could be due to wanting control, feeling different from their peers and/or testing the boundaries.

It's important to try and complete all prescribed treatments daily. Try not to feel down if you are not able to get everything done. Some days are just harder than others. If your daily routine feels unachievable for your family, please discuss it with your CF team to see how it may be altered or what additional supports, strategies and ideas can be tried to make it fit your life better.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Teach about medical adherence early

Open discussion and education is key to your child participating in their CF care. By teaching your child about their body and the importance of taking care of themselves, you are laying a solid foundation of CF education to build upon as your child grows up.

- Ask yourself: *Does my child understand why they need to complete their daily CF treatments? Do they understand the consequences of not doing their treatments?*
- Use play and stories to teach your child about the importance of doing their treatments based on what's important to them. For example, *"Doing your chest physio every morning means that you'll have enough energy to play sports with your friends."*

Knowledge isn't enough to change behaviour but it helps to understand why treatments are being pushed.

2. Consistency and routine

If you teach your child about their treatments (*what, when and how*), they are more likely to know what to expect on a day-to-day basis and anticipate daily treatments.

- Through trial and error, develop a treatment routine for you and your child. Other parents have found it useful to set alarms and/or align treatments with their child's favourite TV show. It may take time to get a routine that works for you and your child, but it'll be worth it!
- Use visual schedules to outline the required treatments and other important tasks (including sleep and school) and put it where all family members can easily see it.
- Make sure your child knows what the length and duration of each treatment is. Some parents have found countdowns and timers useful (refer to example countdown applications in the resources below).
- Breaking up the routine with fun exercise 'breaks' may help keep your child motivated.



3. Work as a team and do treatments together as a family

- Involve siblings to provide distraction and/or company.
- Set goals and rewards together. For example, *"After Jesse does her chest physio, we can all play a game together."*
- Invite other adults that you trust to supervise while your child does their treatment. This will give you a break so that you can take care of yourself as well.
- Give all your children (child with CF and their siblings), jobs to do during treatments, such as pushing buttons on machines, holding their mask, or counting enzymes.

4. Positive parenting and behaviour management

Setting your child up for success is often easier in the younger years and "pays off" as your child gets older. To help manage your child's behaviour, here are some tips:

- Treatment isn't optional, but that doesn't mean it's not flexible! Use choices rather than demands to help your child feel like they have some control. Try: *"It's time for physio, where would you like to sit, on the chair or on the floor?"* or *"Would you like your pills with strawberry or chocolate milk?"*
- Use rewards to increase your child's motivation, but remember to give the reward *after* they finish the treatment. Use a visual *"First → Then"* chart to help your child understand the connection between the treatment and the reward (for example *First* nebuliser → *Then* sticker).
- Understanding the reasons behind your child's behaviours will help you to problem solve what step to take next. If you understand *why* your child is reacting a certain way, you can better understand what to do about it.
- Provide specific positive praise and rewards when your child follows their daily routines and treatments. For example: *"I like how you put on your mask, that's very helpful!"*.

See additional resources on the next page.





Additional resources: Daily routines and treatment

- Triple P parenting program, currently free online for Queensland parents
 - http://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/qld-uken/find-help/triple-p-online/toddlers-to-tweens/?itb=52aa16fc56779ac9b2ae91a8b47927ba&gclid=CjwKCAjwOqLOBRBUEiwAMG5xMGqaHBPRf77XDi-GKq23LE1z7cwzgNak13t8ycLjNlPb3B7izkOoNhoCmH8QAvD_BwE
- Ask your QCH Occupational Therapist for additional handouts, ideas and/or resources such as:
 - Social stories and strategies to help teach your child about the importance of treatment adherence
 - Visual schedule templates i.e. *First → Then chart*
- Ask your QCH Physiotherapist for additional ideas of fun exercises to break up the routine
- Here are some countdown timer apps that you might find helpful:

