

School Camps

School camps are an exciting part of school life. They provide many positive experiences, and in most cases, children with cystic fibrosis (CF) should still be able, and encouraged, to attend, however, it may involve some forward planning and extra considerations.

When considering sending your child on a school camp, you may need to think about:

Location

Where will the camp be held?

- Consider the environment and if there are any serious risk factors of exposure to environmental bacteria such as straw, stables or stagnant water areas.
- How far is the camp from medical assistance in case your child becomes unwell?

Medications

How will the school manage the administration of medications while your child is away, such as enzymes, salt, Ventolin, insulin and/or other?

- Who will carry their medications, and will your child be able to self-administer?
- You will also need to consider storage of medications- do they need to be stored at a certain temperature?

Physiotherapy

When and where will physio be done?

- Will your child need access to a power point for nebulisations or is the nebuliser battery powered?
- Do they need a private location to ensure minimal disturbance?

Diet

Will they need extra or special dietary allowances?

- Can this be catered for by camp staff? If not, perhaps you will need to pack salt, butter and other easy to add high calorie meal additions.

- You may need to pack extra snacks like muesli bars or supplement drinks.

Dehydration

Consider dehydration risk, and ensure staff are aware of the risks and know the signs of dehydration and how to manage these.

- Will it be very hot? Or are they likely to be particularly active?
- Will they have access to water at all times?
- Can they access cordial/sports drinks, salt supplements, salty foods if required?

Toilet access

- Will there be easy access to toilets?
- Will they need to take their own toilet paper?

Infection Control

- Will they have access to water, soap and paper towel to ensure good hand hygiene? If not, they may need to take their own antibacterial hand gel, paper towel and tissues.
- Ask that your child be separated from anyone who becomes unwell during the camp.

Overseas Trips

Some schools even offer overseas travel to students. If your child is presented with a wonderful experience like this, here are some important considerations (as well as all of the above mentioned):

- Does the country have a Reciprocal Health Care Agreement with Australia? This will affect access to medications and health care if your child becomes unwell.
- Seek out travel insurance. There are companies that will cover people with CF.
- Research the location of the local CF clinic at the destination.
- Consider infection prevention and control. E.g. food and environmental risks.
- Speak to your child's CF clinic prior to travel so they can help prepare you. Some centres will suggest a course of IV antibiotics beforehand and will review any vaccinations required.

- Get letters from your child's CF clinic explaining diagnosis, list of medications including those nebulised; especially if requiring a compressor or insulin.

Before the Camp

- Ensure teachers attending the camp have an up-to-date copy of your child's Health Care Plan.
- You may wish to develop a Risk Minimisation Plan with the school prior to the event. This is a plan you can draw up with the school to identify risks and develop strategies to minimise them.
- Nominate a teacher (possibly someone the student knows and likes) to be the student's contact person and to assist with treatment or any issues during the camp.
- Locate contact numbers of the local medical centre closest to the camp location in case of emergency. Include this on the Risk Minimisation Plan.

Potential Emergencies for Teachers to be Aware of

- Exacerbation of CF symptoms: Change in cough, shortness of breath, haemoptysis (blood in mucus), bowel obstruction.
- Dehydration.
- Damage to PEG, PICC or port (if applicable).
- Cystic Fibrosis Related Diabetes (if applicable) complications such as high or low blood glucose levels.

Useful Resources

- School Camp Checklist www.cfsmart.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CF035I-PST-School-Camp-Checklist.pdf
- Travelling with CF Factsheet www.cfwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CF-Fact-Travelling-for-Children.pdf
- Health Care Plan www.cfsmart.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CF-Health-support-plan-High-school.pdf

Cystic Fibrosis WA

The Niche
11 Aberdare Rd
Nedlands WA 6009

Postal Address
PO Box 959
Nedlands 6909

T: +61 8 6457 7333
F: +61 8 6457 7344
E: admin@cfwa.org.au

Disclaimer: The information contained herein is provided in good faith. However accuracy of any statements is not guaranteed by Cystic Fibrosis WA. We provide the information on the understanding that persons take responsibility for assessing relevance and accuracy. Individuals are encouraged to discuss their health needs with a health practitioner.

© Copyright Cystic Fibrosis Western Australia 2018