

## Procedural Anxiety in Adults

Procedural anxiety is an excessive fear or worry about a medical procedure. Severe procedural anxiety can delay or even stop people from receiving the medical care they need.

### What Causes It?

Procedural anxiety is common among CF patients due to the frequency of hospital admissions and appointments that occur from a young age.

It may be triggered by anticipation of pain, previous negative experience, sense of losing control, fear of something going wrong or worry about the results, such as a lung function test.

You may experience worry or anxiety in anticipation of, during and even after a procedure. Avoiding a procedure due to anxiety can have negative health consequences, so it is important to seek help and find ways to better cope.

### Methods to Reduce Procedural Anxiety

- Learn about the procedure beforehand. This can increase your sense of control and allow you to properly prepare yourself.
- Use topical agents to numb the skin and minimise pain e.g EMLA cream.
- Distraction techniques such as listening to music, counting backwards, watching TV or playing video games.
- Visualisation/imagery techniques.



- Deep breathing exercises.
- Progressive muscle relaxation, such as tensing and relaxing different groups of muscles.
- Bring a family member or friend along for support.
- Medications can be used for severe anxiety. Discuss with a mental health professional.

There are various apps available to assist with distraction or medication techniques, including Calm, Insight Timer, Smiling Mind and more.

### Where to Seek Help

Procedural anxiety can be managed and symptoms improved. Speak with your CF care team about your previous experiences and work together to create a plan around coping with procedures.

A mental health professional can work with you to help you learn some of the techniques mentioned above.

CFWA also have a Senior Therapist who can chat with you about your experiences and link you up with appropriate help. Contact [services@cfwa.org.au](mailto:services@cfwa.org.au) for more information.

## Useful Resources

- [Procedural Anxiety](#) (CF Foundation)
- [How I Calm My Nerves Before Clinic](#) (CF Foundation)
- [CFWA Factsheets](#)

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[www.cfwawest.org.au](http://www.cfwawest.org.au)

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