

The CF Diet

Your child's diet is a very important part of the management of CF. A well-rounded diet including a variety of foods from all food groups is recommended for all children with CF. Good nutrition has been linked to increased survival rates and better prognosis.

Historically, children with CF required a high fat diet. With recent advancement of treatment options, this is no longer the standard recommendation for all children.

Each child's requirements are different depending on their age, gender, physical activity, disease state, lung function and medical history. For example, during respiratory exacerbations, a child may have increased energy needs, your dietitian will discuss this with you as required.

A good diet can help children:

- Fight and recover quicker from infections
- Grow and develop appropriately,
- Support lung function
- Have more energy for everyday activities

[The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating](#) highlights the five food groups children should be offered to eat from daily.

Fibre

Fibre is an important part of healthy eating.



It helps form and move stools through the digestive tract, reducing the risk of constipation and bowel blockages. It also provides food for the good bacteria that live in our intestines. Foods high in fibre should form part of your child's daily diet.

High fibre foods include:

- Wholegrain cereals
- Nuts
- Beans
- Lentils
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole wheat & grains such as brown rice

High Energy Diet

Children with increased needs such as those who are experiencing poor growth or recurrent illnesses may be encouraged to follow a higher energy diet. However, this is individualised and should be discussed with and monitored by your child's dietitian.

If your child requires a high energy, high protein diet more information can be [found here](#).

Modulators

Many children with CF are now eligible for modulator medications, which target the defective gene present in people with CF.

As modulators may improve pancreatic function, your child's nutritional needs may change when they commence this medication. As pancreatic function improves, your child may start absorbing more fat and nutrients from food and find it easier to gain weight. We are still waiting for new guidelines to be developed around a healthy CF diet in the modulator era.

Modulator drugs need to be taken with a meal or snack that contains fat to help the body absorb the medicine. Click on the links below for more information and recipe ideas:

- [Trikafta- fat containing food ideas](#)
- [Symdeko- fat containing food ideas](#)
- [Orkambi- fat containing food ideas](#)
- [Kalydeco- fat containing food ideas](#)
- [CF & gene modulator therapy nutritional considerations](#)

Thank you to Jordan Brockett and Mylie McMahon, CF Dietitians, Perth Children's Hospital, for input into this factsheet.

Last reviewed August 2023.