

## Baseline Treatments & Modulators

CFTR modulators (such as Alyftrek®, Trikafta®, Orkambi®, Symdeko®, or Kalydeco®) have transformed life for many people with CF. They can improve lung function, reduce infections and hospital admissions, and help people feel better day-to-day.

When health has improved significantly, it's completely understandable to wonder if all the previous treatments are still necessary. However, based on research and shared patient experiences, for most people baseline treatments do still matter, even when modulators are working well.

### Modulators aren't a cure

Modulators help the CFTR protein in the cells work better, but they do not fully correct CF in every cell or organ. Existing lung damage does not disappear, chronic airway inflammation and infection can still occur, and thick mucus can still build up over time. Modulators are not a cure, so some maintenance therapy is still needed to maximise the impact of these medications.

### Lung damage can happen without symptoms

Research has shown that inflammation and infection can exist in the lungs with little or no obvious symptoms. Some people may not have a cough or any other symptoms and may feel much better, but on investigation they have mucus plugging, infection, and inflammation with no warning signs. Feeling well doesn't always mean the lungs are completely clear and relying solely on the obvious symptoms that used to indicate infection becomes risky.



Baseline treatments help protect your lungs before problems show up on scans or lung function tests.

### Importance of maintenance therapy

Even on modulators, keeping up with some maintenance therapy (airway clearance, exercise, inhaled therapy, other medication) remains important to prevent infections and inflammation, maintain optimal lung function and lower the risk of long-term decline.

Completing airway clearance and targeted exercise programs regularly can help highlight any subtle signs of infection by looking for changes in cough or mucus during treatment rather than just at rest. Regularly attending clinic is also key in maintaining optimal health.

## Research findings

The improvements seen in modulator therapy research reflect the benefit of modulators in combination with ongoing airway clearance and other maintenance therapy. We don't actually know the long-term outcome of modulators in the absence of all treatment.

## Treatment plans

For some people, treatment burden can be reduced, but this needs careful monitoring to make sure there are no unintended consequences. It is important not to stop or change treatments on your own. What's safe for one person with CF may not be safe for another. Modulators help you feel good, but baseline treatments help keep you healthy. Doing both gives your lungs the best chance for long-term stability, slower disease progression and a healthier long-term future.

If you're finding treatment burden overwhelming or questioning what's still necessary, talk openly with your CF care team. It is important to attend regular clinic appointments and speak openly with your CF care team. Shared decision-making is the key to success when reducing treatment and quality of life will be part of this process.

## Useful resources

- [CFFutures](#) (CFWA)
- [Protecting Future You](#) (CFWA animation)