

Cystic Fibrosis Research News

Title:

CAN EXERCISE REPLACE AIRWAY CLEARANCE TECHNIQUES IN CYSTIC FIBROSIS? A SURVEY OF PATIENTS AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS.

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What was your research question?

We wanted to know if people with CF and those looking after them would like to see if we can replace some or all chest physiotherapy with exercise.

Why is this important?

“Can exercise replace chest physiotherapy for people with CF?” was one of the CF community’s top 10 research questions during the recent James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership or “questionCF” as it was known on Twitter and Facebook.

What did you do?

We conducted an online survey of the CF community to see what people currently do for their chest physiotherapy/airway clearance techniques (‘physio’), what the health care team recommend, how well people stick to physio, and what type of exercise people do.

What did you find?

There were 488 people took part, with 40% people with CF (pwCF), 29% family and 31% healthcare professionals (mostly physiotherapists). We found that only 4% of pwCF do no



Cystic Fibrosis Research News

exercise at present and 54% already add exercise into their physio routine. However, nearly half of pwCF skipped their physio when they exercised. Nearly three quarters (73%) of the healthcare professionals though that a clinical trial looking at swapping some or all physio for exercise is a good idea. An additional 8% thought that such a clinical trial would be a good idea for some patients.

What does this mean and reasons for caution?

This means that health care professionals would like a clinical trial to see if we can replace some or all chest physiotherapy with exercise for people with CF. People with CF are already exercising and in some circumstances, substitute it for their chest physio.

As with all anonymous online surveys, you need to be a little cautious with the results. What people say they do and what they actually do can be quite different. However, because the survey was anonymous people could be more honest without worry of their health care team finding out.

What's next?

The data presented here will allow us to design clinical studies which will begin to answer the question of whether exercise can replace some physio in CF.

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