My Mummy has CF

written by Andrea M Armitage
illustrated by Jessica Stockham

PUBLISHED BY THE CYSTIC FIBROSIS TRUST

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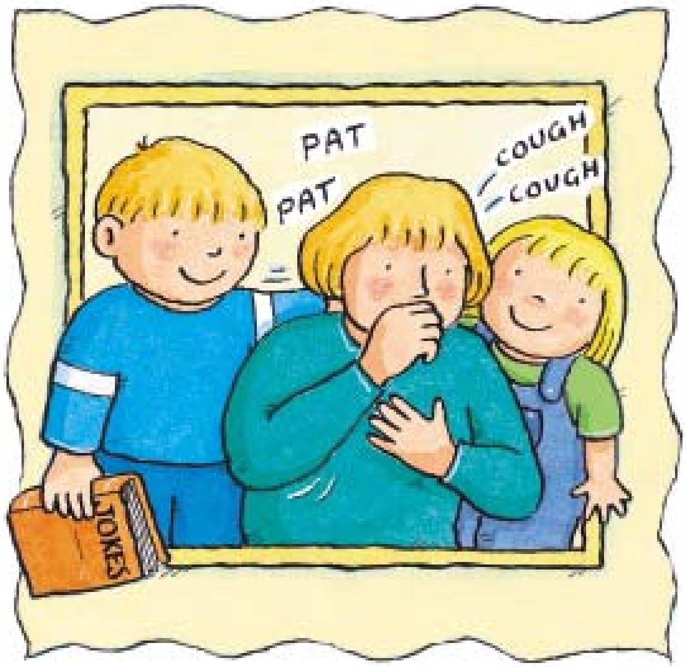
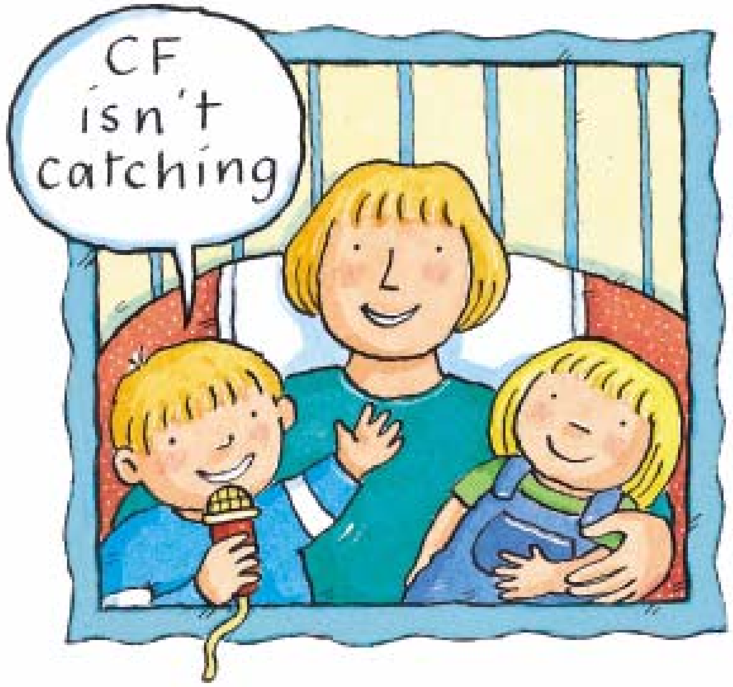
My name is Tom and I am five years old. I have a baby sister called Ellie who is very messy and very noisy!

Today we are going to the clinic at the big hospital with mummy. It is a long way so we have to go in the car.

Mummy has a disease called Cystic Fibrosis (CF). The doctor gives her medicine to keep her well.



My mummy sometimes coughs a lot, especially if I make her laugh! I help her by patting her on the back. I am very good at this and so is Ellie.



My mummy was born with CF. Me and Ellie were not born with CF. You can't catch CF.

It is very busy at the clinic and we meet lots of people. Sometimes we see my friend Daniel here. Daniel’s mummy has CF too.

The nurse comes to see us first. She always asks mummy to stand on the weighing scales. Mummy has to eat lots of food to keep her strong. Sometimes a lady called a dietician helps mummy to choose healthy meals and snacks. She thinks I am growing into a very big boy now.

When mummy eats her food she has to take some tablets called enzymes. The enzymes help her to get all the goodness out of the food.

Next we see someone called the physiotherapist. Mummy has to blow into a big tube which measures how well her chest is working. The physio lets me and Ellie have our own tubes to blow into.

Mummy has to do physio everyday to stop too much sticky stuff collecting in her chest. She takes medicine called antibiotics to help stop the germs which can grow there. Sometimes she uses a special machine called a nebulizer which helps her to breath in some of her medicine.

CF means my mummy has days when she is well, and days when she is unwell. On the days when she is well we have lots of fun. On the days when she is unwell she gets cross and tired which upsets her, because she says she knows that being miserable can make me and my sister sad, and that it isn't our fault.

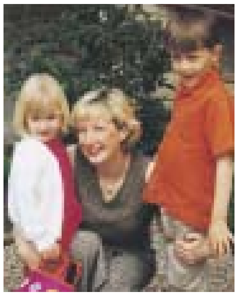
Sometimes, if too many germs grow in mummy's chest and make her feel poorly she needs very strong medicine to help get rid of them. The doctor puts a small needle into her skin so that the very strong medicine can get right into her body and work well.

Once the doctor has made the needle work, mummy can come home to have her very strong medicine. Sometimes, if she is feeling very tired and needs a good rest, the nurses can look after her in the hospital ward.

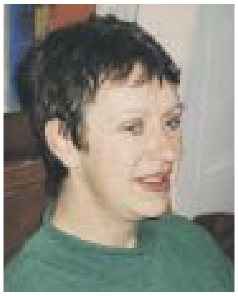
I know when my mummy is well again because she can nearly catch me when we race in the park. I am a very fast runner!

It is nearly time to leave the hospital now. The doctor puts a stethoscope in his ears and listens to mummy's chest. Today he says he can hear that her chest is very well. He gives me his stethoscope and lets me listen to Ellie's heart beating.

Now we can go. Everyone waves goodbye. Come on Mum, I'll race you to the park!



Andrea Armitage was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis (CF) when she was 18 years old. She lives with her husband Nick and their two children, Thomas and Elysia. Following an 11 year nursing career, Andrea now works for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust as Senior Advocate in Leeds.



Jessica Stockham is a freelance illustrator working mainly for children's books and popular magazines. She lives in west Wales with her husband and two sons.

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