With time, all people with cystic fibrosis will transition from a pediatric cystic fibrosis center to an adult cystic fibrosis center. Now that you are getting older, it will be important to take an active part of your health and learn how to approach managing your life as an adult. We created this fact sheet about cystic fibrosis as a tool to look at as you get ready for college, a job, or moving away from your parents.

**What is cystic fibrosis (CF)?**
Cystic fibrosis is a genetic condition that people are born with. It is not contagious. The gene, or piece of DNA that is affected, is involved in the movement of water and salt in and out of cells. Because of this, cystic fibrosis can cause sticky mucus to build up in the lungs, digestive system, and reproductive system causing symptoms that affect the whole body. When the mucus builds up in the lungs, bacteria can grow, causing infection and inflammation that can affect how well the lungs function in the short and long run.

**How is cystic fibrosis diagnosed**
In the U.S., we have a screening test called the newborn screen, which can test babies’ blood for a substance called trypsinogen. If this test is abnormal, then the baby might have cystic fibrosis. Some states also screen for common genes for cystic fibrosis. These are just screening tests, so more testing is needed to confirm the diagnosis. If the screening test is positive a sweat test is done to confirm the diagnosis of cystic fibrosis.

**How do you treat cystic fibrosis?**
Chest percussive therapy and medicines are used to manage the symptoms of cystic fibrosis. Each person may have different medicine regimens, since everybody is unique. For the lungs, inhaled medicines like bronchodilators (albuterol) can help open up the airways. Antibiotics can control and treat infections. There are also medicines that can break up mucus. If the pancreas is involved, enzyme capsules can help with digestion. High calorie drinks and diets can help with keeping a healthy weight, as well. Vitamins, mineral supplements, and exercise are recommended for good bone health. New medications that actually treat the gene defect are becoming increasingly available. It can be helpful to keep track of all medicines with applications on your phone or tablet.

**Where to go for more information:**
- Your current doctor
- Your family
- cff.org

Our clinic is happy to help you every step of the way in your transition. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us with questions or concerns.