PROFILE

Katie Moore

LIVING WITH CYSTIC FIBROSIS (CF)

"Thanks to better medication and services and research (and determination), one quarter of the adult CF population in Ireland now have children"

My baby boy Milo is 7 months old now - I still can't believe how lucky I am to be his mum, it's something I'll never take for granted. I'm 33 years old and was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis at 6 months of age. Noel and I are together almost 11 years now. We always talked about kids, and hoped we would be lucky enough to have some of our own. I'm very maternal and babysat for almost everyone in my town! When I turned 30 I decided to concentrate extra hard on my health and try prepare myself for getting pregnant, fingers crossed.

I was nervous at the thought of pregnancy and the possibility of becoming unwell, but it definitely wasn't going to stop me. I took all the extra vitamins and kept up my fitness to try my best at staying healthy and strong.

Although I live in Mayo, I was referred to the Coombe Maternity Hospital in Dublin, which deals in high-risk pregnancies and my doctor mentioned that due to my fitness (having run marathons), it would all stand to me during the pregnancy.

I'm a self-employed visual artist, I work mainly on commissions or bursaries. I had finished up a year-long project where I was awarded the New Work Award with Arts and Disability Ireland, and I had also just graduated from my Masters course.

Cystic Fibrosis is still a very tough disease to live with, in so many ways. However thanks to better medication and services and research (and determination), one quarter of the adult CF population in Ireland have children of their own now- something that would have been almost unheard of 20 years ago.

RARE DISEASE

About Cystic Fibrosis

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a progressive, genetic multi organ disease that primarily impacts on the lungs and digestive system. CF causes persistent lung infections and limits the ability to breathe over time. At a basic level CF causes a build-up of thick and sticky mucus in various organs.

In the lungs, the mucus clogs the airways and traps germs, like bacteria, leading to infections, inflammation, respiratory failure, and other complications. For this reason, minimizing contact with germs is a top concern for people with CF, including from other people with CF.

In the pancreas, the build-up of mucus prevents the release of digestive enzymes that help the body absorb food and key nutrients, resulting in malnutrition and poor growth. In the liver, the thick mucus can block the bile duct, causing liver disease. CF also impacts on fertility in both men and women, Ireland has the highest level of CF in the world with 1 in 19 of the indigenous population carrying the altered CF gene. There have been significant improvements to CF care in recent years, though still more to do.