

## Enzymes in High School

Most people with CF are pancreatic insufficient, meaning their pancreas does not produce the enzymes that are needed to break down food for digestion. This can make it very difficult to absorb nutrients from food and maintain a healthy weight. As a result of this, pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy is needed to help digest food.

### Pancreatic Enzymes

Pancreatic enzymes are taken with all meals and snacks containing carbohydrates, fat and protein. They don't need to be taken with simple sugars such as fruit, lollies, juice, cordial, and water.

The enzymes come in capsule form, and when taken, travel down to the stomach where they work to help break down food. **Like vitamins, they are not harmful to other students.**

### Enzymes at School

Enzymes can be well managed in school with good communication with the student and their parents. Schools should discuss with the parents and student the level of support they may need with taking their enzymes. This should be detailed in their Student Medical Plan.

Enzyme dosage is different for everyone but is generally based on the amount of fat in the food. Most students in high school will be able to calculate their dosage and take their enzymes independently.

If enzymes are skipped, the student may have stomach pain and diarrhoea, so teachers should be aware of the importance of allowing the student to go to the bathroom as needed.



### More Information

For more information about CF, we have free eLearning modules, including one specific to enzymes, as well as other resources available on our [CFSmart website](https://www.cfsmart.org.au).