



Cystic Fibrosis Australia  
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Cysticfibrosis.org.au



## MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 18 August 2011

**10** years

**\$3 million dollars raised**

**but.....**

**every 4 days a child is born with Cystic Fibrosis  
and sadly the life expectancy is only 37!**

**Help us celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> year of the Cystic Fibrosis Great Escape Car Rally by raising funds and awareness for this wonderful cause.**

Over 48 crazy cars are coming on this year's fun filled Cystic Fibrosis Great Escape Car Rally travelling 3,800kms from Tamworth to Port Douglas. While the laughs are plenty, many participants sadly have a personal connection with Cystic Fibrosis.

Teresa Carlson our rally champion and ambassador has been coming on the rally since it started 10 years ago and has raised thousands of dollars in memory of her beautiful daughter Michelle, sadly lost to Cystic Fibrosis at 17.

Since the Cystic Fibrosis Great Escape Car Rally started in 2002, over \$3m has been raised, last year over \$400,000 and this year we hope to equal that amount so we can continue to help find a cure.

Every year is a new adventure where participants get to see outback Australia and places off the beaten track. In the past nine years, we have visited Fraser Island, Uluru, Great Keppel Island, the Whitsundays, the Burke and Wills Tree, Kangaroo Island and travelled the Great Ocean Road just to name a few!

This year's rally starts in three weeks at Tamworth and travels through many towns including; Emmaville, The Gums, Emerald, Bowen River, Charters Towers, Oak Park, Forsayth, Undara, finishing at Port Douglas the perfect place to unwind and relax!



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Cystic Fibrosis Australia (CFA) is asking Australian's to donate to this cause that gets no government funding. All donations go to research and support to continue the quest for a cure. Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is a genetic condition that primarily affects the lungs and digestive system and sadly results in a shortened life expectancy.

In Australia every four days a child is born with Cystic Fibrosis. Every baby is screened at birth for Cystic Fibrosis, as over a million Australians are carriers of the gene. Funds raised by The Great Escape will be directed to research projects, including the Cystic Fibrosis Data Registry and support services for children and young adults living with Cystic Fibrosis.

**People can donate directly or to cars by calling 1800 635 008 or visiting [www.thegreatescape.org.au](http://www.thegreatescape.org.au) or [www.cysticfibrosis.org.au](http://www.cysticfibrosis.org.au)**

"The Great Escape" is touching an increasing number of Australian communities and continues to assist families living with Cystic Fibrosis. Funds raised will help develop treatment and provide support to improve the quality of life of Cystic Fibrosis sufferers" said Mr Terry Stewart, CEO of Cystic Fibrosis Australia.

#### **The Great Escape:**

[www.thegreatescape.org.au](http://www.thegreatescape.org.au)



[www.facebook.com/pages/Cystic-Fibrosis-Great-Escape-Car-Rally/338415656688](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cystic-Fibrosis-Great-Escape-Car-Rally/338415656688)



<https://twitter.com/#!/CFGreatEscape>



<http://www.youtube.com/user/cfgreatescape>

- Ends

#### **Further information:**

For more details about The Great Escape 2011, including the event brochure, itinerary, images and videos visit [www.thegreatescape.org.au](http://www.thegreatescape.org.au) and watch the Great Escape Website, Facebook and Twitter pages for updates daily during the rally with images and travel anecdotes.

#### **Media contact:**

Interviews, live crosses, daily updates and/or photo opportunities can be arranged with Terry Stewart (CEO of Cystic Fibrosis Australia), and other local and interstate rally entrants. These media opportunities are available before, after and for the entire duration of the rally.

Press releases, images and video footage will be available for download on the media page at [www.thegreatescape.org.au](http://www.thegreatescape.org.au)

To arrange an interview or request further information, contact Dianne Johnston 0408 243 611 or [diannej@themarketeer.com.au](mailto:diannej@themarketeer.com.au)

**Photo caption:**

'Rosie', the official CFA rally car each year is driven by Cystic Fibrosis CEO, Mr Terry Stewart.



## Further information about Cystic Fibrosis

### What is Cystic Fibrosis?

Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is the most common life threatening recessive genetic condition affecting Australian children and young adults today. It primarily affects the lungs and digestive system by clogging them with thick, sticky mucus. Repeated chest infections can cause irreversible damage and untimely death. Mucus can also cause problems in the pancreas preventing the release of enzymes needed for the digestion of food.

### Who is affected?

CF is an inherited condition. For a child to be born with CF both parents must be genetic carriers for CF. They do not have to have CF themselves.

### How common is CF?

Approximately one in every 2500 babies will be born with CF with one child born every four days. Two-thirds of infants born with CF will be diagnosed in the first year of life. About 3,000 adults and children are living with this disorder. In Australia, on average there is one carrier of the Cystic Fibrosis gene in each classroom. There are 1 million carriers of the Cystic Fibrosis gene in Australia.

### How is CF diagnosed?

In Australia, all babies are screened at birth for CF. A blood spot test is applied and if this test proves to be positive a sweat test will be done to measure the amount of salt in the sweat. It is with this test that a final diagnosis is made.



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### **What are the symptoms of CF?**

CF affects primarily the lungs and digestive system. People with CF may have the following symptoms:

- Persistent cough, particularly with physical effort
- Some difficulty in breathing or wheezing with effort
- Tiredness, lethargy or impaired exercise ability
- Frequent visits to the toilet
- Salt loss in hot weather which may produce weakness
- Poor appetite

### **Is CF contagious?**

CF is not contagious. Coughing is a frequent symptom of CF. Some people are afraid they may catch it, but CF is an inherited condition which is present at birth. You cannot 'catch' CF and you cannot give it to anyone else.

### **What is the life expectancy for someone with CF?**

Until quite recently CF was a genetic mystery, and most people with the disease died before they reached their teen years. In the 1980's, average life expectancy was 17. Due to improved research, today it's 37. It's still just 37.

### **What has been the impact of CF research?**

Over the past 10 years researchers have made great progress in understanding the genetic basis of CF, and this has led to earlier detection.

Research has also lead to better knowledge and management of the condition, and extended life expectancy and higher quality of life.

\$5 million raised and contributing towards research has increased the average life expectancy of a person with CF by 10 years.

### **Is there a cure for CF?**

There is no cure. However, with today's improved treatments most people with CF are able to lead reasonably normal and productive lives.

A great amount of time, energy and money is being directed towards finding new and improved ways of treating CF and finally finding a cure. It is hoped that the emerging field of gene therapy may soon help to correct lung problems in people with CF.

### **What treatment is currently available?**

While there is currently no cure, CF sufferers undertake intense daily chest physiotherapy to move mucus in the lungs. 40-60 enzyme replacement tablets are taken each day to aid digestion.

### **What is needed?**

Money!!! Cystic Fibrosis Australia does not receive government funding for research.

The money raised through donations fund research and support that will improve treatments and hopefully find a cure for this debilitating and life threatening disorder.