



WHAT IS PEI?

Pancreatic enzymes are necessary to help the body digest and absorb nutrients. Many people, including those with CF, are not able to produce the pancreatic enzymes they need to process food correctly, a condition that is called pancreatic exocrine insufficiency, or PEI.

For people with CF, PEI is a result of thick mucus secretions that block the openings, or ducts, of the pancreas. This blockage prevents the digestive enzymes that are made in the pancreas from reaching the small intestine, where they work. And when there aren't enough pancreatic enzymes in the small intestine, normal digestion is impaired and the body doesn't get the nutrients it needs.

There is a way to help the body function when PEI is present. Pancreatic enzyme supplements act like the body's natural enzymes, breaking down food and increasing absorption in the small intestine.

HOW DO PANCREATIC ENZYME SUPPLEMENTS WORK?

Pancreatic enzyme supplements improve the digestion of foods by helping the body turn fat, protein, and starch into the fuel it needs to grow, build muscle, and maintain the best health possible.



ESSENTIAL
FACTS FOR
MANAGING PEI



Solvay
Pharmaceuticals





For people with cystic

fibrosis (CF), life holds daily challenges.

Over time and with determination, many of

the lifestyle choices necessary to stay

healthy – such as exercise, physical

therapy, and good nutrition



– become part of a daily routine.

There are other aspects of CF that can be

managed with medication, such as

pancreatic exocrine insufficiency,

also known as PEI.



HOW DO PANCREATIC ENZYME SUPPLEMENTS WORK? (continued)

Pancreatic enzyme supplements are capsules that contain a combination of several body-friendly enzymes to aid digestion and absorption of necessary nutrients. The capsules are taken during each meal and snack. If needed, the capsules can be broken open and the enzymes sprinkled on soft foods that are swallowed without chewing, such as applesauce. After they are swallowed, the enzymes mix with food in the stomach. Then they travel through the stomach to the small intestine, where they help break the food down into important nutrients that are absorbed by the body.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF PEI?

The symptoms of PEI may include weight loss, change in appetite, abdominal pain, diarrhea, gas, and frequent, bulky stools. People with CF usually experience these problems when they are children, but sometimes the symptoms occur for the first time in adulthood. Because pancreatic enzyme supplements help the body digest food, they also reduce many of the symptoms of PEI.

WHAT IS THE RIGHT DOSAGE?

A doctor and nutritionist usually figure out the best dosage of pancreatic enzyme supplements for each person. Some of the things they consider are the severity of symptoms, body

weight, the size and frequency of meals and snacks, and how well the person responds to different amounts of enzymes.

Because CF is a physically demanding disease, some people need extra calories to maintain growth and achieve weight goals. Pancreatic enzyme supplements help maximize the benefits of extra food.

CF AND OTHER PROBLEMS

Although it is rare, sometimes CF can increase the risk of diabetes. No one knows exactly why this happens, but it may be because damage in the pancreas limits the supply of insulin to the bloodstream. For people with diabetes and CF, the proper diet, nutrition, and medications are important to stay healthy.

Occasionally, CF may damage the liver in the same way that it affects the pancreas. Though this is not common, it does occur in some people with CF and may require treatment.

TALK WITH A DOCTOR AND NUTRITIONIST

Doctors and nutritionists are valuable sources of information for developing an overall health and nutrition strategy. If you have any questions or concerns about the information discussed in this brochure, please talk with a doctor or nutritionist.