

United in Health

Did You Know?

Cystic Fibrosis is a life threatening genetic disease that affects the lungs and digestive systems of approximately 30,000 children and young adults in the U.S.



David and Amy

When **Amy** first met her college roommate as a freshman at Penn State, she had no idea what cystic fibrosis (CF) was. However, when she saw all the medication and equipment her roommate, **Melissa**, came with, she was pretty sure CF was something bad. Amy recalled, "I looked at all of her stuff and thought, 'this isn't going to work.' Melissa had 30-40 pill bottles, a vest that she had to wear for 45 minutes 2-3 times per day to break up mucus in her chest, and a nebulizer (inhaler)."

Amy was right, cystic fibrosis is bad. It's a disease that causes thick, sticky mucus to build up in the lungs, digestive tract, and other areas of the body. However, Amy was wrong about Melissa not being fun and they soon became best friends. Melissa's lungs had already begun to fail at age 18. By the time she was 21, she had to be on portable oxygen at all times. She was able to have a double lung transplant that year and did well for awhile. However, after 18 months, Melissa went downhill. She lost her battle to cystic fibrosis when she was only 23 years old.

Shortly after Melissa's funeral, Amy joined the national fundraising team for the **Cystic Fibrosis Foundation** (CFF). A few years later, she met **David**, who is from Lincoln, NE. He had lost a 33-year-old brother to CF eight months after a lung transplant. They connected and Amy moved to Lincoln with him. They both continue to fight for a cure for the disease that took their loved ones from them. Amy said, "With all of the new drugs available now, there is so much hope. That's why fundraising is more important than ever, so that we can speed up the discovery of a cure."

