

Antibiotic Management of Lung Infections in Cystic Fibrosis: Part I. The Microbiome, MRSA,
Gram-Negative Bacteria, and Multiple Infections

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1 Abstract

2 Despite significant advances in treatment strategies targeting the underlying defect in
3 cystic fibrosis (CF), airway infection remains an important cause of lung disease. In this two part
4 series, we review recent evidence related to the complexity of CF airway infection, explore data
5 suggesting the relevance of individual microbial species, and discuss current and future treatment
6 options. In Part I, the evidence with respect to the spectrum of bacteria present in the CF
7 airway, known as the lung microbiome is discussed. Subsequently, the current approach to treat
8 methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), Gram-negative bacteria, as well as
9 multiple co-infections is reviewed.

10 Newer molecular techniques have demonstrated that the airway microbiome consists of a
11 large number of microbes, and the balance between microbes, rather than the mere presence of a
12 single species, may be relevant for disease pathophysiology. A better understanding of this
13 complex environment could help define optimal treatment regimens that target pathogens
14 without affecting others. While relevance of these organisms is unclear, the pathologic
15 consequences of MRSA infection in CF patients have been recently determined. New strategies
16 for eradication and treatment of both acute and chronic infections are discussed. *P. aeruginosa*
17 plays a prominent role in CF lung disease, but many other non-fermenting Gram-negative
18 bacteria are also found in the CF airway. Many new inhaled antibiotics specifically targeting *P.*
19 *aeruginosa* have become available with the hope that they will improve the quality of life for
20 patients. Part I concludes with a discussion of how best to treat patients with multiple co-
21 infections.

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23 **Introduction**

24 Cystic fibrosis (CF) lung disease is characterized by airway obstruction, chronic bacterial
25 infection, and a vigorous host inflammatory response (1). Antibiotic therapy of bacterial lung
26 infections has tremendously contributed to the increased survival in CF (2). However, many
27 bacteria form biofilms in the CF lung that make their eradication difficult (3). In addition, it has
28 also become clear that only a small fraction of the microbes present in the CF airway are being
29 identified with routine laboratory techniques (4, 5), and both extended culture methods and
30 molecular techniques have identified organisms that previously were not routinely cultured (6).
31 Traditional antibiotic susceptibility testing performed on planktonic bacteria has been found to
32 be of limited clinical use in chronic airway infection as most bacteria in the CF lung exist in
33 biofilms (7). While it has long been recognized that patients clinically respond even when their
34 infecting organisms are pan-resistant, 25% of patients do not reach pre-exacerbation values in
35 lung function measures despite aggressive treatment for their bacterial lung infections (8),
36 demonstrating that current treatment is inadequate when addressing the complexity of airway
37 infection. In addition to bacteria identified by routine sputum culture methods, clinicians are
38 often faced with an array of multi-drug resistant organisms that are difficult to treat. In this
39 manuscript and its companion manuscript, we provide a summary of current aspects of airway
40 infection in CF. These manuscripts are derived from a symposium organized by the Scientific
41 Assemblies on Pediatrics and Clinical Problems and presented at the 2013 American Thoracic
42 Society (ATS) International Conference in Philadelphia, PA. In Part I, we discuss the lung
43 microbiome in CF, methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), Gram-negative
44 bacteria, and approaches to treating multiple infections. In Part II, we discuss nontuberculous
45 mycobacteria, anaerobic bacteria, and fungi. The current evidence for treatment of these lung

46 infections in CF, which we summarized, is limited. Within these documents, we also provide a
47 pragmatic approach as to how one might treat these infections. However, it is important to note
48 that these manuscripts are not meant to represent definitive treatment guidelines or consensus
49 recommendations. For available guideline recommendations, the reader is referred elsewhere in
50 the published literature (9-13).

51

52 **The Lung Microbiome in Cystic Fibrosis**

53 The conventional view of CF airway microbiology has been based on the recovery in
54 culture of a suite of bacterial pathogens, including *S. aureus* and opportunists such as
55 *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Burkholderia cepacia* complex, *Achromobacter* species, and
56 *Stenotrophomonas maltophilia*. The Human Microbiome Project, an NIH sponsored initiative
57 launched in 2007, applying *culture-independent* methods to assess bacterial ecology, has
58 significantly broadened this view. Numerous studies now provide compelling evidence that the
59 airways of persons with CF may be inhabited by diverse bacterial communities comprised of
60 dozens of species (14-23). In addition to ‘typical’ CF pathogens, ‘non-pathogenic oral bacteria’,
61 including many obligate and facultative anaerobic species, are often present in densities that well
62 exceed those of the traditional opportunists associated with CF (4). Although most of these
63 studies analyzed expectorated sputum samples that would be expected to be ‘contaminated’ with
64 bacteria residing in the non-sterile oropharynx during expectoration, several lines of evidence
65 indicate that this has only a marginal impact on measures of airway microbiota (17, 24, 25).

66 Limited studies of children with CF indicate that bacterial community diversity (a
67 measure of both the number and relative abundances of the species present) increases with age
68 (14, 26). In contrast, several cross-sectional and longitudinal studies of adults have shown that

69 diversity decreases with age and declining lung function (14, 18, 22, 23). Analyses of respiratory
70 specimens from persons with end-stage lung disease or from lung explants show very
71 constrained communities, often limited to a single dominant species (23, 27). These observations
72 suggest that after an initial increase during childhood, airway bacterial diversity peaks in young
73 adulthood, and then declines with advancing age and disease progression (Fig. 1). Antibiotic use
74 may be the primary driver of decreasing diversity with advancing disease (23).

75 The change in the airway microbiota around the time of exacerbations of pulmonary
76 symptoms is an area of intense interest. Fodor and colleagues (15) showed that bacterial
77 community richness decreased transiently with antibiotic therapy, but rebounded quickly
78 thereafter. Zhao and colleagues (23) similarly showed a significant decrease in diversity with
79 antibiotic therapy of exacerbation, but did not find significant changes in diversity when
80 comparing samples from periods of clinical stability to those taken at the onset of exacerbation
81 symptoms; a finding that was subsequently confirmed in a larger study (28). Interestingly, this
82 latter study showed a *decrease* in the relative and absolute abundance of *P. aeruginosa* in
83 communities dominated by this species at the onset of symptoms leading to exacerbation.

84 Thus, our traditional view of CF airway microbiology is changing. Whereas bacterial
85 communities likely become more diverse during childhood, they become increasingly confined
86 with advancing lung disease and antibiotic treatment in adulthood. Eventually, a single species
87 representing one of the traditional CF pathogens (*S. aureus*, *P. aeruginosa*, *B. cepacia* complex
88 or *Achromobacter* spp.) dominates the community. Despite this dramatic decrease in diversity,
89 total bacterial density appears to remain rather constant. The dynamics of bacterial communities
90 around the time of exacerbation suggest that the dominant pathogen in the community may
91 *decrease* with onset of symptoms. As our understanding of the dynamics of airway bacterial

92 ecology continues to expand, so too will the opportunities to develop novel strategies to better
93 manage airway infection in CF.

94

95 **Methicillin-Resistant *S. aureus***

96 The prevalence of MRSA has increased dramatically over the last decade and now is
97 detected in the respiratory tract of greater than 25% of patients with CF in the United States (29).
98 The prevalence of MRSA in Canada and Europe is lower, ranging from 3 to 11% of patients with
99 CF (30). Chronic MRSA infection in patients with CF is associated with increased rate of lung
100 function decline, failure to recover lung function after a pulmonary exacerbation, and decreased
101 survival (8, 31, 32). Currently, there are no conclusive studies demonstrating an effective and
102 safe treatment protocol for MRSA respiratory infection in CF (33). Here, we provide a practical
103 framework on how to treat MRSA infection in different clinical scenarios by first describing
104 antibiotic choices and then subsequently provide guidance for defining patients that require
105 treatment.

106 In CF patients infected with MRSA who are experiencing an acute pulmonary
107 exacerbation, vancomycin and linezolid are the first-line antimicrobial choices (34, 35). Dosing
108 of vancomycin is based on the patient's weight and creatinine clearance. A trough concentration
109 of 15 to 20 mcg/mL, which is the practice of most CF physicians based on a recent survey (36),
110 should be the considered target. Linezolid dosing may need adjustment in children with CF (37),
111 but not adults (38). Because approximately 80% of CF patients with chronic MRSA may also be
112 infected with *P. aeruginosa*, linezolid, rather than vancomycin with its associated renal effects,
113 may be a good option in these patients who require anti-*Pseudomonas* treatment with other
114 nephrotoxic drugs such as aminoglycosides. As depression is detected in greater than 20% of

115 adults with CF (29), it is important to note that linezolid can be associated with the serotonin
116 syndrome in CF patients taking serotonergic psychiatric drugs (39). Chronic linezolid use may
117 also be associated with the development of potentially irreversible peripheral and optic
118 neuropathies and linezolid resistant MRSA (40). In patients with allergies or contraindications to
119 the above medications, alternative antibiotics include rifampin, fucidin (not available in the
120 United States), ceftaroline, tigecycline, chloramphenicol, and/or clindamycin.

121 The approach to CF patients with MRSA infection seen in the outpatient clinic has
122 recently been reviewed (30). Doe and colleagues (41) reported that patient segregation and
123 aggressive antibiotic eradication therapy can achieve eradication in the majority of patients with
124 CF. Numerous antibiotic regimens were used; however, the most successful were those
125 regimens that included two oral antibiotics (one of which was rifampin) and nebulized
126 vancomycin. Rifampin has been a component of successful MRSA eradication protocols due to
127 its high mucosal concentrations and activity against biofilms, but it should be used in
128 combination with another antibiotic as resistance develops quickly with monotherapy (30).
129 Rifampin can also be associated with worsening gastroesophageal reflux and decreased efficacy
130 of oral contraceptives (42).

131 Inhaled antibiotics have been used as a treatment for CF respiratory tract infections since
132 penicillin first became available (43). Fosfomycin tobramycin (FTI) for inhalation has activity
133 against anaerobic, Gram-negative, and Gram-positive bacteria including MRSA. In a clinical
134 trial of FTI in CF patients with *P. aeruginosa* infection, 29 patients with MRSA at baseline had
135 significant decreases in the concentration of MRSA after 28 days of FTI (n=19) compared to
136 placebo (n=10) (44). Current published experience with aerosolized vancomycin suggests that it
137 is safe and well tolerated (45, 46). There are two ongoing studies investigating the use of inhaled

138 vancomycin, including one assessing a novel dry powder formulation (47, 48). The results of
139 these trials will help to delineate the risks and benefits of treating chronic MRSA infection.

140 Because there are no definitive studies to guide the decision to treat (or not to treat)
141 MRSA infections in CF, the following approach is based on uncontrolled studies and anecdote.
142 The MRSA population can be split into four groups: 1) new MRSA infection in an asymptomatic
143 patient, 2) new MRSA infection in a symptomatic patient, 3) chronic MRSA infection in an
144 asymptomatic patient, and 4) chronic MRSA infection in a symptomatic patient. There is no
145 standard definition for chronic MRSA infection, but previous and ongoing studies typically have
146 defined chronic infection as having at least 3 MRSA positive cultures within the previous 6-12
147 months (32, 47, 48). The most straightforward decision for treatment occurs in those patients in
148 whom MRSA is cultured from the respiratory tract and who are also experiencing an acute
149 pulmonary exacerbation. Ninety-eight percent of CF providers in the US who responded to a
150 survey regarding MRSA treatment stated they would give oral or IV antibiotics in this situation
151 (36). The advantages and disadvantages of various treatment regimens are detailed in the above
152 paragraphs.

153 Many CF providers have wondered if there is a role for eradication of respiratory-tract
154 MRSA infection. Arguments for recommending and withholding systemic therapy can be made
155 for eradication of a new MRSA infection. Previous studies have suggested that 1/3 of new
156 MRSA infections may subsequently clear; suggesting the risks of treatment may not outweigh
157 the benefits (32). However, the easiest time to eradicate MRSA is most likely when it is first
158 cultured before it becomes entrenched in the lung. Unfortunately, at the time of first culture, it is
159 not possible to determine which patients will clear spontaneously and which will progress to
160 chronic MRSA infection. For these reasons, one approach to a new MRSA infection is to

161 perform an eradication attempt with oral antibiotics. Because MRSA is often found outside of
162 the respiratory tract, an eradication attempt may also include treatment with nasal mupirocin and
163 chlorhexidine or bleach baths. Interestingly, in contrast to *P. aeruginosa*, there is some evidence
164 that chronic MRSA may be eradicated from the respiratory tract (41). Given that oral antibiotics
165 alone may not be enough to eradicate chronic MRSA, the addition of inhaled antibiotics
166 targeting MRSA also may be considered.

167 The most difficult to treat patients with MRSA are those who are chronically infected and
168 who do not have enough symptoms to trigger the administration of IV antibiotics, but who have
169 persistent respiratory symptoms. These patients may respond temporarily to repeated courses of
170 oral antibiotics, but eventually this treatment may become associated with decreased efficacy,
171 resistance, and/or side effects. One suggested approach is to administer 250mg of the IV
172 formulation of vancomycin reconstituted in 5cc of sterile water via nebulization mist treatment
173 (48). The patient inhales the medication twice daily for 28 days. Albuterol is often inhaled prior
174 to the administration of the antibiotic, although a pilot study did not demonstrate that
175 bronchospasm was a significant issue (46). At the conclusion of the 28-day treatment period, a
176 repeat culture is obtained to determine if MRSA can still be detected in the respiratory tract. If
177 the patient becomes symptomatic when not taking inhaled vancomycin, and has not eradicated
178 MRSA, then suppressive treatment with either every other month or continuous inhaled
179 vancomycin may be given. Again, these are potential options for patients with new or chronic
180 MRSA infection while we are awaiting the results of ongoing clinical trials that will further
181 inform treatment decisions (47-49).

182

183 **Gram-Negative Bacteria**

184 As individuals with CF age, their airways become more frequently infected with Gram-
185 negative bacteria. In the United States, the overall prevalence of pulmonary infection with multi-
186 drug resistant *P. aeruginosa*, *S. maltophilia* and *B. cepacia* complex in CF patients is 9%, 14%
187 and 3%, respectively (29). Infection with these Gram-negative organisms is associated with
188 poorer clinical outcomes, such as rapid lung function decline, increased risk of pulmonary
189 exacerbation and greater rates of mortality or need for lung transplantation (50-55).
190 *P. aeruginosa*, *B. cepacia* complex and *S. maltophilia* are found in the environment and have
191 consequently developed ways of surviving in harsh milieus with exposure to naturally occurring
192 antimicrobials. Treatment is thus difficult due to their impressive array of antimicrobial
193 resistance mechanisms, which include efflux pumps, chromosomally encoded β -lactamases,
194 decreased outer membrane permeability and biofilm formation(56). Given these numerous
195 mechanisms of antimicrobial resistance, these bacteria are deemed resistant to drugs such as
196 aminoglycosides, β -lactams and fluoroquinolones by *in vitro* testing according to Clinical
197 Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) guidelines(57). However, aerosolized antibiotics can yield
198 higher sputum concentrations, in areas of the lung that remain well ventilated, through direct
199 delivery to the site of infection (**Table 1**) (58-65). There is a relationship between the maximal
200 drug concentration achieved and the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) required to inhibit
201 bacterial growth, with higher ratios associated with greater reduction in bacterial density (66).
202 Therefore, newer inhaled antibiotics, herein discussed, have the potential to be used as chronic
203 suppressive treatment for pathogens traditionally considered resistant to these agents.

204 One of the new inhalational antibiotics available is tobramycin inhalation powder (TIP)
205 delivered by the podhaler device. TIP has been shown to result in comparable increases in forced
206 expiratory volume in 1 second (FEV₁) and decreases in hospitalization as tobramycin inhalation

207 solution (TIS) in the treatment of chronic *P. aeruginosa* in CF patients (67). However, TIP can
208 achieve up to 1.5-2 fold higher sputum tobramycin concentrations (up to 2,000 $\mu\text{g/g}$) than TIS.
209 *In vitro* studies of 180 *B. cepacia* complex and 103 *S. maltophilia* isolates demonstrated an
210 MIC_{50} of 100 $\mu\text{g/ml}$, tested by planktonic and biofilm growth (68). This suggests that a
211 $C_{\text{max}}/\text{MIC}$ ratio of up to 20 may be achievable with TIP treatment of these pathogens. Clinical
212 trials of TIP in CF patients with *B. cepacia* complex and *S. maltophilia* infection to decrease
213 sputum bacterial density are planned.

214 Inhaled aztreonam solution is another aerosolized antimicrobial for the treatment of
215 chronic *P. aeruginosa* in CF. Non-inferiority studies have shown that it is comparable, if not
216 superior, to TIS in non-treatment naive individuals with respect to increases in lung function
217 (69). When used in trials for CF patients with chronic *B. cepacia* complex infection, however,
218 inhaled aztreonam did not result in any statistically significant improvement in FEV_1 or
219 decreases in sputum bacterial density compared to placebo (70). The ability of β -lactam
220 antibiotics to function in the CF lung could be limited by the slow, anaerobic, biofilm growth of
221 organisms (71). *In vitro* studies of biofilm growth of *P. aeruginosa* on CF airway cells have
222 demonstrated little additional benefit of aztreonam in combination with tobramycin, likely due to
223 bacterial exopolysaccharide production causing tolerance to aztreonam (72). In addition, in an
224 ongoing clinical trial of biofilm susceptibility testing of over 1,000 clinical *P. aeruginosa* CF
225 isolates, the percentage of β -lactam susceptible isolates was reduced when grown as a biofilm
226 compared to planktonically. These data suggest that, despite the known limitations of
227 antimicrobial susceptibility testing in CF, this class of antimicrobials may be less effective in
228 this context (73).

229 Finally, studies of aerosolized levofloxacin have demonstrated improvements in lung
230 function (8.7% increase in FEV₁ vs. placebo) and decreases in bacterial pulmonary burden (0.96
231 log difference in density vs. placebo) in *P. aeruginosa* infected patients with CF (74).
232 Levofloxacin is a second generation fluoroquinolone that in addition to having anti-*P.*
233 *aeruginosa* effects has activity against *S. maltophilia* (56). In an *in vitro* study of a large number
234 of clinical *S. maltophilia* CF isolates, levofloxacin, at levels achievable by inhalation, was the
235 most active antibiotic alone and in combination, against *S. maltophilia* grown as a biofilm or
236 planktonically(75). In addition to achieving high levels of drug in the lung (4,000 µg/g),
237 levofloxacin also has anti-inflammatory effects (58, 76). Inhaled levofloxacin may thus be an
238 effective chronic suppressive antimicrobial therapy in CF patients with chronic *S. maltophilia*
239 infection and warrants further investigation as it may have utility beyond the treatment of *P.*
240 *aeruginosa* infection.

241 The treatment of multidrug resistant Gram-negative bacteria in CF patients with
242 advanced lung disease is challenging given the intrinsic resistance of these organisms to
243 antimicrobials of several different classes. Engaging a microbiologist and/or infectious disease
244 expert in a discussion about potential therapeutic options for these patients may thus be fruitful.
245

246 **Treating Multiple Infections**

247 The recognition that there is a diverse microbiota in sputum samples from people with CF
248 raises questions about how we approach antibiotic therapy. Conventional bacterial culture in
249 aerobic conditions allows isolation of a limited number of organisms. Extended culture methods
250 identify a much wider range of bacteria, which include more difficult to culture bacteria such as
251 anaerobic bacteria (4, 15, 23). At present, there is no readily available methodology to identify

252 all of these organisms in a way that makes this information valuable for clinical treatment (77).
253 Studies are under way to develop technologies to allow molecular identification without prior
254 culture (78). The choice of antibiotics for pulmonary exacerbations associated with multiple
255 bacteria is an area that has not been extensively studied. A number of different oral and
256 intravenous antibiotics may be combined to tailor antibiotic therapy as best possible to particular
257 combinations of positive bacterial culture results. Antimicrobial susceptibility testing with single
258 agents or synergy protocols for *P. aeruginosa* and *B. cepacia* complex organisms are not helpful
259 as they do not predict response to treatment (79-81). However, treatment with antibiotics for a
260 pulmonary exacerbation to which the main bacterial species is resistant is associated with
261 treatment failure (82). These studies have been observational, and there are few randomized
262 controlled trials to help in choosing antibiotics for pulmonary exacerbations. The choice is
263 largely empirical and based upon the experience of the physician, patient and previous
264 occurrence of drug allergy. In addition, there are no data to suggest that this also applies to other
265 bacteria cultured in CF sputum. The dosages and side effects of common antibiotics used to treat
266 MRSA and Gram-negative bacteria are provided in **Table 2**.

267 Combinations of organisms that are commonly encountered with *P. aeruginosa* are *S.*
268 *aureus*, *H. influenzae*, *S. maltophilia*, *B. cepacia* complex and *Achromobacter* spp. Other
269 combinations can occur, and studies describing the airway microbiome indicate that co-infection
270 is common and often complex. Two or more organisms may be cultured in approximately 25%
271 of sputum samples. Table 3 indicates the susceptibility of these bacteria to antibiotics used to
272 treat *P. aeruginosa*. These susceptibilities are a guide to consider combinations of IV and oral
273 antibiotics for pulmonary exacerbations where multiple bacteria are present to maximize the
274 appropriateness of antibiotic choice against the organisms isolated. As molecular diagnostics for

275 a wider range of bacteria in the CF airway microbiome become available, clinical trials will be
276 needed to better inform the choice of antibiotics for long-term bacterial suppression and
277 treatment (6).

278

279 **Summary**

280 MRSA and *P. aeruginosa* are two of the most prevalent bacteria isolated from CF sputum
281 from patients in the United States (29). In addition, several Gram-negative bacteria, which
282 rapidly become resistant to multiple antibiotics, have been described over the last several years.
283 These bacteria are often difficult to treat, and have garnered much attention from clinicians,
284 investigators, and pharmaceutical companies with respect to the development of drugs for the
285 treatment of acute exacerbations and chronic suppression. Antibiotics have been the cornerstone
286 of CF care for decades (11). However, the frequent use of antibiotics likely alters the host's
287 microbiota with yet poorly defined consequences. Because of this selective pressure and with
288 the advent of new laboratory isolation techniques, many previously unrecognized
289 microorganisms are being identified from CF lung secretions. The pathogenic significance of
290 many of these microorganisms is still unknown. This information is important to the CF
291 clinician and patient, as we need to understand which organisms to treat whereas treatment of
292 other organisms may actually be detrimental by enabling pathogenic bacteria to expand. As
293 antimicrobials will likely remain a cornerstone of CF therapy far into the future, research into CF
294 lung microbiology must continue until that time when the disease is cured and its associated
295 airway infection is eradicated.

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565 **Figure Legends**

566 **Figure 1.** Schematic representation of airway bacterial community diversity versus patient age
567 or lung disease severity. Available data suggest that after an initial increase during childhood,
568 airway bacterial diversity peaks in young adulthood, and then declines with advancing age and
569 lung disease progression. At end-stage disease, bacterial communities may be dominated by a
570 single species, most often a “typical” CF opportunistic pathogen.

Tables

Table 1. Serum and sputum antibiotic concentrations

Drug	Mean peak serum concentrations ($\mu\text{g/ml}$)	Mean peak sputum concentrations ($\mu\text{g/g}$)
Tobramycin		
• Intravenous (8 mg/kg/day) (range)	29.4 (23.1-35.5)	3.88 (1.8-5.7)
• Aerosolized Solution (300mg) (\pm SD)	1.04 \pm 0.58	737 \pm 1,028
• Aerosolized Powder (112 mg) (\pm SD)	1.02 \pm 0.53	1,048 \pm 1,080
Amikacin		
• Intravenous (35 mg/kg) (\pm SD)	121.4 \pm 37.3	10.95 \pm 7.55
• Aerosolized (560 mg) (\pm SD)	1.29 \pm 0.77	2,286 (11.6-11,220)
Levofloxacin		
• Oral (500 mg)	6.5	5.1
• Aerosolized (240 mg) (\pm SD)	1.71 \pm 0.62	4,691 \pm 4,516
Aztreonam		
• Intravenous (2 g)	80.1	5.2
• Aerosolized (75 mg) (range)	0.622 (0.31-1.7)	537 (0.2-3,010)
Colistimethate (Colistin)		
• Intravenous (7mg/kg/day) (\pm SD)	23 \pm 6	N/A
• Aerosolized (2 million units) (\pm SEM)	0.178 \pm 0.018	40 \pm 5

SD: standard deviation; SEM: standard error of the mean

Table 2.[§] Empiric antibiotic therapy for the treatment of difficult pulmonary bacterial infections in CF

Organism	Antibiotic	Pediatric Dose	Adult Dose	Side Effects
Gram-positive organisms				
Methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	Vancomycin	15 mg/kg intravenously every 6h	1 g intravenously every 12h	-Oto/nephro toxicity, red man syndrome
	OR Linezolid	if <11 yrs: 10 mg/kg intravenously or orally every 8h if >11 yrs: 10 mg/kg intravenously or orally every 12h	600 mg intravenously or orally every 12h	-Optic/peripheral neuropathy, myelosuppression
Gram-negative organisms				
<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i>	Tobramycin*	10 mg/kg intravenously every 24h	10 mg/kg intravenously every 24h	-Ototoxicity, nephrotoxicity
	OR Amikacin**	30 mg/kg intravenously every 24h	30 mg/kg intravenously every 24h	
	OR Colistin (colistimethate sodium)	8 mg/kg/day intravenously divided every 8h	8 mg/kg/day intravenously divided every 8h (max 480 mg/day)	-Nephrotoxicity, neurotoxicity
	PLUS (choose one):			
	Ticarcillin/clavulanate	100 mg/kg of ticarcillin component intravenously every 6h	3 g of ticarcillin component intravenously every 6h	-GI, rash, hepatitis, neutropenia
	Ceftazidime	50 mg/kg intravenously every 6h††	2 g intravenously every 8h††	-GI, rash
	Meropenem	40 mg/kg intravenously every 8h	2 g intravenously every 8h	GI, rash, hepatitis, neutropenia
Ciprofloxacin		400 mg intravenously	-GI, rare seizure,	

		15 mg/kg intravenously or 20 mg/kg orally every 12h	or 750 mg orally every 12h	tendinopathy
<i>Burkholderia cepacia</i> complex	Meropenem	40 mg/kg intravenously every 8h	2 g intravenously every 8h	-GI, rash, hepatitis, neutropenia
	PLUS (choose 1):			
	Ceftazidime	50 mg/kg intravenously every 6h	2 g intravenously every 8h	-GI, rash
	Chloramphenicol ^o	15-20 mg/kg intravenously every 6h	1 g intravenously every 6h	-Bone marrow suppression /failure
	Trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole	4-5 mg/kg (max 240 mg) of trimethoprim component intravenously or orally every 12h	4-5 mg/kg (max 240 mg) of trimethoprim component intravenously or orally every 12h	-GI, hypersensitivity neutropenia, serum sickness
	Aztreonam	50 mg/kg intravenously every 8h	2 g intravenously every 8h	-GI, rash
<i>Stenotrophomonas maltophilia</i>	Trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole	4-5 mg/kg (max 240 mg) of trimethoprim component intravenously or orally every 12h	4-5 mg/kg (max 240 mg) of trimethoprim component intravenously or orally every 12h	-GI, hypersensitivity neutropenia, serum sickness
	PLUS (choose 1):			
	Ticarcillin/clavulanate	100 mg/kg of ticarcillin component intravenously every 6h	3 g of ticarcillin component intravenously every 6h	-GI, rash, hepatitis, neutropenia
	Levofloxacin	if <5yrs: 10 mg/kg intravenously or orally every 12h if >5 yrs: 10 mg/kg intravenously or orally once daily	500-750 mg intravenously or orally once daily	-GI, rarely seizure, tendinopathy
	Doxycycline [†]	2 mg/kg intravenously or orally every 12h	100 mg intravenously or orally every 12h	-GI, photosensitivity

	Tigecycline	1.2 mg/kg intravenously every 12h	50mg intravenously every 12h	-GI, cholestasis
<i>Achromobacter</i> species	Meropenem	40 mg/kg intravenously every 8h	2 g intravenously every 8h	-GI, rash, hepatitis
	OR Imipenem	15-25 mg/kg intravenously every 6h	500 mg-1 g intravenously every 6h	-GI, rarely seizures
	PLUS (choose 1): Trimethoprim/ sulfamethoxazole	4-5 mg/kg (max 240 mg) of trimethoprim component intravenously or orally every 12h	4-5 mg/kg (max 240 mg) of trimethoprim component intravenously or orally every 12h	-GI, hypersensitivity neutropenia, serum sickness
	Ciprofloxacin	15 mg/kg intravenously or 20 mg/kg orally every 12h	400 mg intravenously or 750 mg orally every 12h	-GI, rarely seizure, tendinopathy
	Minocycline†	2 mg/kg intravenously or orally every 12h	100 mg orally every 12h	-GI, photosensitivity

GI: gastrointestinal

[§]The antibiotic doses given in this table come from a compilation of sources and practice patterns including commonly prescribed off-label doses and uses. Sources include the pharmacy formulary of The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, ON, which is based upon product inserts and the published literature. The doses given are general guidelines, and may vary somewhat between institutions. It is recommended that the clinician consult his/her institution's pharmacy, product inserts, and published literature before prescribing these drugs.

* Serum concentrations should be monitored and aim for a maximum serum concentration (C_{max}) in the range of 20-40 mg/L with a minimum serum concentration (C_{min}) of <1 mg/L.

** Serum concentrations should be monitored and aim for a maximum serum concentration (C_{max}) in the range of 80–120 mg/L with a minimum serum concentration (C_{min}) of <1 mg/L.

° Serum concentrations should be monitored; the peak concentration ranges from 15-25 µg/ml and the trough from 5-15 µg/ml.

† Should not be given to children less than 8 years of age.

†† Continuous infusion of ceftazidime may be considered in cases of clinical failure or for the treatment of multi-drug resistant *P. aeruginosa* in order to maximize the time above the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC)

Table 3: Typical susceptibilities to anti-pseudomonal antibiotics of bacteria commonly cultured from the CF airway

A. Commonly used antibiotics to treat <i>P. aeruginosa</i> infection in the CF airway						
Bacteria	CAZ	PIP/TAZ	Antibiotic			COL
			MER	AZT	TOB	
<i>S. maltophilia</i>	✓	+/-	----	----	----	✓
<i>Achromobacter</i> spp.	✓	✓	----	----	----	+/-
BCC	+/-	+/-	+/-	----	----	+/-
MSSA	+/-	✓	✓	----	✓	----
MRSA	----	✓	----	----	✓	----
<i>Streptococci</i>	+/-	✓	✓	----	----	----
<i>H. influenzae</i>	✓	✓	✓	+/-	✓	----
<i>P. aeruginosa</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Anaerobes	----	✓	✓	----	----	----
B. Less Commonly used antibiotics to treat <i>P. aeruginosa</i> infection in the CF airway						
Bacteria	CO-T	DOX	Antibiotic			TIG
			CHL	FOS		
<i>S. maltophilia</i>	✓	✓	+/-	----		✓
<i>Achromobacter</i> spp.	✓	✓	+/-	----		✓
BCC	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-		+/-
MSSA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
MRSA	+/-	✓	----	✓		✓
<i>Streptococci</i>	✓	✓	✓	+/-		✓
<i>H. influenzae</i>	✓	✓	✓	?		✓
<i>P. aeruginosa</i>	----	----	+/-	✓		----
Anaerobes	----	----	✓	----		✓
✓: in vitro susceptibility; +/- borderline susceptibility; ---- resistance not known; CAZ: ceftazidime; PIP/TAZ: piperacillin-tazobactam; MER: meropenem; AZT: aztreonam; TOB: tobramycin; COL: Colistimethate; CO-T: co-trimoxazole; DOX: doxycycline; CHL: chloramphenicol; FOS: fosfomicin; TIG: tigicycline; BCC: <i>Burkholderia cepacia</i> complex; MSSA: methicillin-sensitive <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> ; MRSA: methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>						

Figures

Fig. 1

