

Hi, I'm Hayley. I started Endometriosis Waikato in 1999 when I moved back to Hamilton after a number of years in Palmerston North, where I had been attending a support group for endometriosis. The first meeting was in my lounge one evening after contacting others with the disease in the Hamilton area. It was very low key in the beginning. We held meetings every two months with a speaker whenever we could arrange one. We then started meeting at the Dinsdale library until Naylin Appanna let us use his waiting room for our meetings, which was about the time Annette took over from me.

I am still involved mainly with poster deliveries, also attending the midweek coffee groups whenever possible, and helping out at Expo stands etc... .

About five years ago I wrote the following article about my experiences with endometriosis:

"It all started when at 12 years of age I experienced excruciating pain and heavy periods making it difficult to participate in PE on occasions at school for fear of flooding and being ridiculed in my white PE gear. My mother was fairly understanding and wrote me a note but was also from the 'Old School' where pain was just something you put up with. And so I did. Until at 18 my symptoms worsened to include bleeding between periods which became unbearable as I had a partner at this stage, fortunately he was also fairly understanding but trips to doctors and the gynaecologist gave no answers at all.

Six pain- and blood-filled years later my partner, who was now my husband, read an article on endometriosis and we both felt sure I had this disease. I went straight to the doctor only to be told by a woman GP: "Who did I think I was that I was important enough to have such a disease"! I cried for days after that.

A couple of years later after returning to live in my hometown, I went to my old family GP who had by this stage heard of endometriosis and sent me to see a gynaecologist at Waikato hospital. It took 6 months to get an appointment. I then went on a waiting list for a laparoscopy. Eighteen months later I was lucky enough to secure medical insurance with existing conditions covered. Two weeks later I had my laparoscopy and my endometriosis was confirmed.

I was nearly 29 by this stage and had been trying for a baby for nearly two years. After the laparoscopy we started fertility treatment. After six years, six IUI treatments, six IVF treatments and a miscarriage, we finally had a baby girl. We were lucky enough two years later to have another little girl. I was 35 when I completed my family and did so reluctantly as we had wanted four children, but the first two were now lost to us and we had to accept that as we felt exquisitely happy to have our two babies.

I still suffer with pain during my periods, heavy bleeding and a number of other endometriosis symptoms, but have accepted that this is my lot. My husband unfortunately has to put up with my mood swings. I feel sorry for him frequently, also my little girls, and I worry that they will suffer as I have. I only hope should they be afflicted with endometriosis they get quicker treatment than I did; I shall be watching them like a hawk."

Update:

Since writing the above article, things have taken a turn for the better as I have now had a Mirena IUD fitted. After nearly a year of getting used to it, things are FABULOUS! I have no pain at all, no periods, no mood swings (well hardly any!) and very little brain fog. I am possibly carrying a smidge more weight but it's a good incentive for me to exercise more and watch what I eat. My husband and my girls are all so much happier with the new me. Long may it last? My eldest baby is now 11 so we are ready for her periods to start in the next year or so...but my goodness I'll be ready to help her should she need it.

For more information:

Visit us at: www.InsightEndometriosis.org.nz or www.Facebook.com/InsightEndometriosis
or contact our Educator, Annette: 07 8555 123 info@InsightEndometriosis.org.nz

© 2012 Endometriosis Waikato