



Meet Our Member - Emma



What conditions have you been diagnosed with and when?

Endometriosis - age 13 (1998), IBS - age 15 (2000), Spontaneous Pneumothorax - age 15 (2000)
Scoliosis / Spinal Fusion T9-L2 - age 19 (2004), Removal of appendix - age 22 (2007), Pelvic Congestion Syndrome - age 31 (2016), Interstitial Cystitis - age 31 (2016), Depression and anxiety - ongoing / circumstantial

How does Endometriosis impact your life?

'With a list that long, it can be fairly significant! Sometimes it has too much emphasis in my life and that drives me insane. On good days, I want to be normal and I don't really want to concentrate on it at all. On bad days, I wish there was more awareness, understanding, support and acknowledgement of the significance of this disease. On bad days, I am extremely thankful for a support group as committed as this one is.

I first suffered symptoms of Endo at the age of 8 when my period started and some 5yrs later, when a sneeze would cause me to lose consciousness from the horrendous pain, I was surgically diagnosed. I hated my teen years and was pretty miserable and depressed for a majority of that time.

It took me until I was about 19 to accept that this disease was a part of my life and that's the best thing I could have done. It doesn't mean I have to like it, but for me, it's easier to accept and acknowledge my mountain in life, and keep climbing.

Endo takes a lot away. Social life, schooling/study, general wellbeing, money!!, time from work and career opportunities, the opportunity to have children, reproductive organs, confidence etc. etc.

When you say cancer - people get it. It's horrendous. The suffering is horrible. It takes away all those things I've just mentioned. The two main points of difference being that endo is not terminal (in the sense that the disease cannot cause death but it definitely leads to suicide in some cases) and endo has very little awareness and support amongst our society.'

If you could give 1 piece of advice to a new sister, what would it be?

'It's your body. If you don't like to answer, keep searching for one that you are happy with. Don't be ashamed of having this disease. Everyone has a story in life, this is ours. It's a merry-go-round and you get good days too.'

Share with us something about you, not your disease. Just you

'I love to sing and dance. Life throws waves and I'm a damn good surfer! I am also a Starlight Children's Foundation ambassador and create awareness for Endo'