



NZ Early Menopause Support Group

www.earlymenopause.org.nz

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December 2007

Hi everyone,

Well, 2007 is drawing to a close, so I thought I'd send out a final update on group events, just to recap the year a bit. And what a great year it has been: we have raised our profile substantially within the medical community and have gained access to some great extra resources.

Here are some of the highlights:

www.earlymenopause.org.nz

Our very own website went live in May and has grown significantly since then. If you haven't had a look at it recently I recommend a leisurely browse through the pages as it keeps changing. Thank you Trudie for getting it started and to all of our contributors who've shared their story. I've had some great feedback about how helpful they have been to the newly diagnosed and their friends/family as they come to terms with POF. It's comforting to know you're not alone.

Ineke has been in touch from Australia and she's really proud of our site. I believe she shared the co-ordinator role with Trudie for a while. She says hi to everyone and suggested she may even make it to Waiwera next year – it'd be lovely to have an international guest!

Flyers

We have distributed many of these around the country to GPs, Endocrinologists, Gynaecologist and Fertility Clinics. Many of these places haven't known we exist and are very glad to have somewhere to refer their patients for the support they need. But there are many we still haven't reached. If you'd like to join the dedicated delivery team – even for just one day – I'd be delighted to hear from you. This will be an ongoing venture so the more volunteers we have, the better coverage we'll have.

Our Resources

We now have quite an abundance of sources of great information.

On our [website](http://www.earlymenopause.org.nz) we provide general information and group info for New Zealanders affected by early menopause. Thanks to the generous donors, we have quite a well-stocked [Reference Library](#) now – more details on our website.

The [Daisy Network](#) newsletters continue to be a great resource as they are aimed specifically at women in early menopause – thank you, Andrew, for keeping them coming! I have copies of the last 5 and a list of the topics covered if you're interested.

The [Australasian Menopause Society](#) provides wonderful fact sheets on many areas of menopause, we get their quarterly newsletters and they also provided us with CDs from their conference this year that contain the latest thinking on Premature Ovarian Failure. More details on the website under 'links & resources' or flick me an email.

The [North American Menopause Society](#) releases "First to Know" newsletters every month which discuss the latest scientific research.

The [Nurture Foundation](#) newsletters come out a few times a year and are an interesting read for those pursuing assisted reproduction techniques.

Don't forget the [websites](#) we recommend on our site as well as they also provide reliable information.

Get-togethers

The Auckland girls have had 4 get-togethers this year and they've all been a lot of fun. If you'd like to organise something in your area but you're not sure where to start, let me know and I'll be happy to help you out any way I can. And do let us know if you do have a catch-up with others in the group – it'd be great to hear how it went! Of

course email contact is very convenient, but I really believe that personal interaction provides the best kind of support – when you're ready for it.

www.everybody.co.nz

I heard about this website from Felicity and decided to have a look and I'm really impressed. They have 'communities' or chat rooms for just about any health issue. And they have a listing of NZ support groups so I have put an entry on there for us. I also arranged for an 'early menopause' entry in their 'health centres' section – many thanks, Andrew, for your help with that one! So check it out – it's a great resource and another good place to spread the word!

www.silverribbon.co.nz

I got an email from the chairman of the Silver Ribbon Foundation in November telling me they'd put a link to our site on their site. They have been set up to increase awareness and support for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer. I think our two groups have a common ground and can be mutually beneficial to each other. I want to get a link to them up on our site soon along with a little blurb about induced/artificial (I'm trying to think of a term to cover "surgical and medical") menopause as that most definitely falls under our 'early menopause' banner and we have very little on our site about it at the moment. If you or anyone you know can help me with this, I'd be really grateful.

North & South magazine article

This was another project from out of the blue that our little website helped us to become involved in. If you've had a chance to read this great article you'll know it condenses a whole lot of information from the last few years into just 4 or 5 pages and is very easy to read. It's on sale now. I'm so pleased they were able to advertise our website during my little paragraph at the end.

2008 Projects

Waiwera – Queen's Birthday Weekend

I think this'll be a great chance for some girly time out and to put faces to names on the email list! It's nothing formal, just a beach house, some hot pools and a fair bit of talking I expect! Do keep it in mind and think about coming along. Feel free to email me if you have any questions or suggestions.

A chat room/forum

Our web hosts have offered to set up a forum for us! I think this will be a fantastic way to enable more discussion in the safety of anonymity – as well as freeing up your inbox space! It'll also allow women to receive some support before they take that brave step of contacting the group in person. I'll let you know more as it takes shape.

Paula wanted me to let you know that as part of her natural therapy business, she has organised some more relaxing retreats for next year along with some exciting travel packages. If you're interested to know more, please contact her at: innerspirit@xtra.co.nz

Christmas is a wonderful time of year surrounded by family and friends and celebrating the good things in life. But I know for me a little of the magic has gone as a result of my infertility. It can be hard being surrounded by family and friends with children, so if you're feeling a little down, please remember this support group is here and try to keep in touch with each other as much as you can over the holidays. I'll be around until early January and then we're heading off for a 4 week holiday that we're really looking forward to: a two week long horse riding camp in the beautiful Bay of Plenty followed by a visit to friends and family in Australia. I'll be checking my emails regularly and am here for a chat anytime.

We've gained a few new members this year and I hope you're all happy with the support we provide. If you have ideas on ways we can improve, I'd love to hear from you. We also have members in various stages of IVF and pregnancy and we wish you all the very best for the coming year. I've really enjoyed getting to know you all a bit

better over the past 6 months and tackling the challenges of this co-ordinator role. Thank you all for your wonderful support, fabulous emails of encouragement and just being your wonderful selves. It really helps just to know you're all out there.

Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year and here's to an exciting 2008!

Nicole x