

ME/CFS AUSTRALIA (Vic, Tas, NT)

Application for Membership

Send to:

ME/CFS Australia (Vic, Tas, NT)
PO Box 7100
Dandenong Victoria 3175

I would like to become a member of the Society

I would like information on ME/CFS

I would like to make a donation

\$10 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Your gift may be acknowledged in our publications. If you wish to remain anonymous please tick this box. Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible. (details correct as at April 2010)

Membership to ME/CFS Australia (Victoria):

\$40 Full Membership \$ _____

\$20 Student/Concession Membership \$ _____

Donation \$ _____

Payment Options

Cheque / Money Order \$ _____

Credit Card: Visa Mastercard \$ _____

Card Number _____

Cardholder Name _____

Expiry Date _____ Signature _____

Your Details:

Name _____

Address _____

Suburb _____

Postcode _____ State _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Date of Birth _____

Diagnosing Doctor _____

Our services

- Self-help courses
- Telephone support
- Support groups
- Facilitated teleconference sessions
- Directory of health practitioners
- 'Emerge' quarterly journal
- ME/CFS resource library
- Seminars and information sessions
- Information dissemination to health practitioners and the community

We are actively involved in

- Supporting health practitioners in their understanding of ME/CFS;
- Community awareness raising activities across three states;
- Political lobbying to draw attention to the experiences of people with ME/CFS; and
- Encouraging and supporting research into ME/CFS.

Membership fees and donations allow us to continue to provide our services, raise awareness of ME/CFS and participate in political lobbying for more services and support. If you do not wish to join as a member your donation would be greatly appreciated to help us continue to provide our important services.

ME/CFS Australia (Vic, Tas, NT)

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SOLVING THE PUZZLE

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

ME/CFS Australia (Vic, Tas, NT)

The administration division of ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Victoria Inc.

The vision of ME/CFS Australia (Vic, Tas, NT) is to be an organisation which has a significant and positive influence on the well-being of people affected by ME/CFS.

The Symptoms of ME/CFS

A person with ME/CFS will meet the following criteria:

- Fatigue;
- Post-exertional malaise and/or fatigue;
- Dysfunctional sleep;
- Pain;
- Have one or more neurological/cognitive manifestations;
- Have one or more of the following:
 - **Autonomic manifestations;**
 - **Neuroendocrine manifestations;**
 - **Immune manifestations; and**
- The illness must persist for at least six months (three months in children).

Please refer to full list of symptoms from the Canadian Guidelines for Medical Practitioners (Carruthers et al, 2005), available at <http://www.mecfs-vic.org.au>

ME/CFS usually has a distinct onset, although it may be gradual. An early diagnosis may be possible.

Causes

The cause is not yet well understood.

Multiple factors may be simultaneously involved. ME/CFS can follow:

- Acute infection, such as glandular fever, and upper respiratory infections;
- Exposure to chemicals, environmental pollutants or heavy metals;
- Immunisation; and
- Severe physical trauma, such as major surgery, or a serious accident.

However recent research is finding strong links with food intolerance, food malabsorption and gut dysbiosis.

Biomedical research is being conducted on many fronts – gastro-enterology, cardiology, immunology, endocrinology, neurology and genetics.

Diagnosis

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians states that ME/CFS is a real and disabling chronic condition, affecting up to 700 per 100,000 people. There is no simple diagnostic test.

Diagnosis is based on Canadian Guidelines for Medical Practitioners (Carruthers et al, 2005).

It can strike men, women and children of all ages, ethnic and socio-economic groups.

Cure

There is no known cure for ME/CFS, however tests to identify food intolerance, food malabsorption and gut dysbiosis are important.

The focus is on easing symptoms and pacing.

It is important to find a knowledgeable doctor who will manage the illness.

Self-management and pacing is vital.

Living with ME/CFS

People with ME/CFS face many challenges.

The illness influences social and family life as well as educational and employment opportunities.

Many are too unwell to work and others can only work part-time.

Social contact can be non-existent. Young people may find it hard to study and require special consideration for school attendance, assignment

deadlines and exams. Some study at home through distance education. Some people have well periods followed by periods with severe symptoms.

The more severely affected are housebound and may require a wheelchair for mobility.

The most severely affected are bedridden and totally dependent on others for all care

Duration

Accurate predictions of recovery for individuals are not possible at this stage.

Early diagnosis may lessen the impact of the illness.

Some make gradual progress and recover well but many do not completely regain their previous level of health.

Some experience a gradual deterioration in their condition.

Severe ME/CFS can have life-threatening complications.

The recovery rate for children is often better than for adults.

People diagnosed with ME/CFS can generally expect to be unwell for some years.

For some it is permanent.

About ME/CFS Australia (Vic, Tas, NT)

ME/CFS Australia (Vic, Tas, NT) is a not-for-profit charitable organisation dedicated to providing information, support and advocacy for the Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome community in Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.