

How to talk to friends and family

It can be really tough when you are faced with an unknown condition such as an adverse effect from surgery or a medical device – It can feel very lonely and difficult to talk to friends and family about. Especially if it includes the word Vagina, as it does for some of us. However, it is important that our loved ones are informed so that we can reduce our isolation by sharing our experience.

We hope this leaflet you can print off may help.

I

am suffering from Mesh injury.

I had surgery for health reasons and have recently discovered that it has been adversely affecting my health for a while now in a number of ways.....

It has been a huge shock to me to discover this and I am struggling to come to terms with it.

I am one of **many** men and women Internationally **who have been adversely affected by surgical mesh**. It has been used in some hernia repairs and for women suffering from pelvic organ prolapses (POP) and stress urinary incontinence (SUI), both are common after childbirth.

Sadly it is not an illness like Cancer where I have an official diagnosis - where it is a condition that is well understood and acknowledged publicly, or where treatments options are readily available and accessible. It is an adverse reaction from a medical device made from polypropylene and it is coming to light that this material ought not to have been used permanently in human bodies. It would seem that the devices were not appropriately regulated and some were often misused and/or misplaced. I am feeling isolated and alone since I found this out and find it tough to talk about.

As this is a sensitive subject for me I ask that if you would like further information about mesh injury, that you can contact 1800 MESHED or visit their website www.meshinjureaustralia.org.au - they have a friends & family support service. Thank you for trying to support me.



1800 MESHED
(1800 637 433)

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You may wish to describe pain or illness on the left, or the range of feelings accompanying the shock, or tick the boxes that best explain your complications:

- I have ongoing pain
- Hurts to go to the toilet
- I'm embarrassed
- I feel isolated and alone
- I feel like I am a burden
- I am depressed
- I am worried about the future
- I can't work because I am in too much pain
- I can't walk far or sit for long periods because of the pain
- It hurts to have sex
- I am anxious about having further surgery
- I am anxious about getting worse
- I am scared
- I have to get up to go to the toilet all the time
- I suffer from chronic urinary tract infection
- I am scared I will lose you as a friend / partner
- I can't control my bladder
- I am relieved that I am not the only one this has happened to.