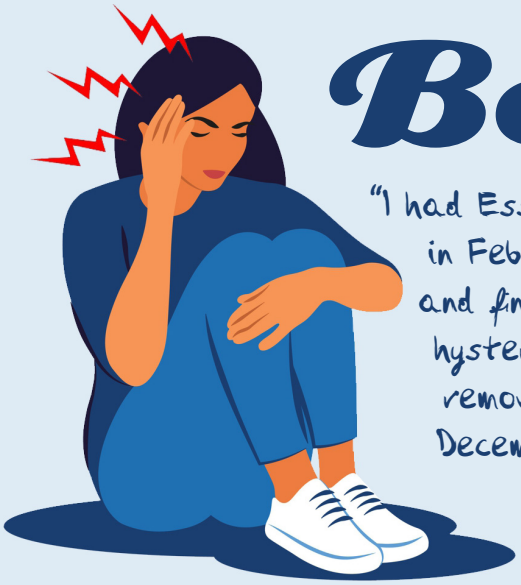

# Beth

"I had Essure implanted in February 2011 and finally had a hysterectomy to remove them in December 2021."

"My battle, like that of my fellow e-sisters, has been long, harrowing, and wholly unnecessary. I've gone from fit and active, walking all of our 16-acre hillside property, to housebound, barely able to cope with a flight of stairs.

While looking for a specialist who might know about Essure and be willing to remove it in late 2020, I learned the device had been recalled. What I discovered horrified me, and completely eroded my trust in gynaecology. It explained a lot about my own rapid health decline.

I have experienced a decade of excessive pain, bleeding, loss of bodily and cognitive function, an escalation of existing allergies, new allergies, dental and bone issues, sporadic bloating, dizzy spells, cold sweats, digestive issues, hair loss, memory loss, and many other symptoms I believe were signs of bodily rejection of the implant. I have: searched for reasons for strange rashes that appeared overnight; stopped venturing too far outside due to constantly stumbling, tripping and falling; and gave up driving due to medication. I felt alone and terrified I was dying, watching my life just fall by the wayside.

I've been on medication I never had before: blood clotting meds, beta blockers (no-one noticed they were killing me), fluid tablets, and four times my normal antihistamine usage, and daily use of anti-inflammatories and pain medication, including opioids. Over the last 12 years, I have been told my extreme allergic reactions and asthma attacks were stress, my increasing pain was in my head, the bleeding was "just something that happens when some women get their tubes tied"; that I was overreacting to symptoms and should just de-stress.

I saw multiple different specialists, but I was never referred to the gynaecologist I was begging for. Denied the scans I needed in the public health system, I paid for my own scans and, later, a private gynaecology clinic visit for biopsies. The scan revealed quite severe adenomyosis, along with a left ovary of questionable health. The recommendation was removal of uterus and left ovary. The biopsy also revealed a VIN 3 lesion on my vulva. In the weeks following the scan I was in excruciating pain, as I was every time I'd had imaging or walked through a metal detector, since the device was implanted.

Prior to my hysterectomy, I began experiencing uterine prolapse along with severe pain (like giving birth to razor blades) and a few weeks later, passed a black blood clot containing pieces of metal. I showed my surgeon on the day of surgery, but she shrugged her shoulders and ignored it.

After surgery, I was told that she "could see the coils in the tubes" but that she just "gave the ovary a squeeze" and decided to leave it because she'd rather leave something half functioning than remove it.

It is now stuck to my bowel, with my intestines around it, causing me pain and additional digestive issues, and is now unable to be removed without another surgery involving multiple specialists.

I had asked for return of my uterus, and when I collected it one of the coils appears to be very broken; the other was visible and appeared to be barely under the outer layer of tissue in the tubes. My uterus also appeared to have shards of metal in it. All these issues have been ignored by my surgeon.

Due to the specialist not giving the device the serious consideration she should have, ACC declined my case for expense reimbursement and, of course, no one is covering my recovery.

Sadly, hysterectomy is not the end of the issues the device can cause, and detox and recovery is slow, expensive, and full recovery is not always possible.

The whole experience has been very traumatic and soul destroying. I am now waiting to have trauma counselling to help me come to terms with the loss of my health, intimacy and physical function, and the loss of employment. Additionally, due to the toll the device has taken on my skeletal system, I am now undergoing what will be lengthy physiotherapy to try to return my body to a more functional state.

This is my life, ruined by Essure.

Devices are allowed to remain on the market because specialists refuse to accept the devices they use can cause harm, do not take them seriously enough, and consequently fail to notify issues to Medsafe, who are then fooled in to thinking that there is no problem.

It is a catastrophic failure of the medical system to protect women in their care.

In Australia, the first of many international trials involving over 1,000 women versus the importers (the same importers as in New Zealand) and manufacturers of Essure is coming to a close. In New Zealand women are still struggling to be heard.

How has this been allowed to happen?"