



Short Circuit



Improved my quality of life

I would like to share with you products that I have found improved my quality of life with Multiple Sclerosis.

UroFem D-Mannose tablets are a natural Dietary Supplement and help the body's natural removal of harmful bacteria. Manufactured by Te Arai BioFarma Limited Auckland, New Zealand.

After being on antibiotics long term for recurring urinary tract infections (UTI) it was not until I visited Dr. Michael Wishaw, Urologist at The Royal Melbourne Hospital, 35-54 Polar Road, Parkville, Melbourne (RMH) that my bladder was given a full check-up. I was also seen on the same day by Christine Baldrey, Continence Service Coordinator who commenced me on Urofem. P: 8387 2194

I have been taking UroFem 1g tablets, two tablets daily for 12 months and have not had any further bladder infections. It was also recommended to stop taking Cranberry capsules and to commence taking Vitamin C tablets daily and Probiotics.

..continued page 2



Armchair Traveller

In some places, we leave home with masks, wallet or handbag and keys, but in this country it is illegal to leave home without a rifle due to roaming polar bears!
(page 6)



Doctor Living with MS

I'm 47 and a former doctor who has lived with multiple sclerosis for the past 27 years.
(Page 4)



Conference 14th Nov

Mark it in your calendar now, the annual conference is being live streamed on Saturday the 14th of November, see this newsletter for more information

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Improved my quality of life

I take Micro genics Probiotics 35 billion, daily supplement recommended by my local Pharmacist. I have been taking Probiotics for 12 months and this has also helped to get my gut health back to normal.

You will need to see your GP if you have a UTI and take a course of antibiotics to get rid of the infection to start with, but then please start taking UroFem. It will not cure MS but your health and quality of life will improve. Thank you Dr. Michael Wishaw and Christine Baldrey at RMH for giving me my life back.

UroFem is only available from BrightSky Australia. Not on prescription and not available from chemists. Allow 2 weeks for delivery. 1300 88 66 01

Another product that I love is Rapigel all natural muscle and joint relieving gel, made by Virbac (AUSTRALIA) Pty. Limited, 361 Horsley Road, Milperra, NSW Freecall 1800 242 100.

Rapigel aids in reducing inflammation and swelling in joints and tendons,

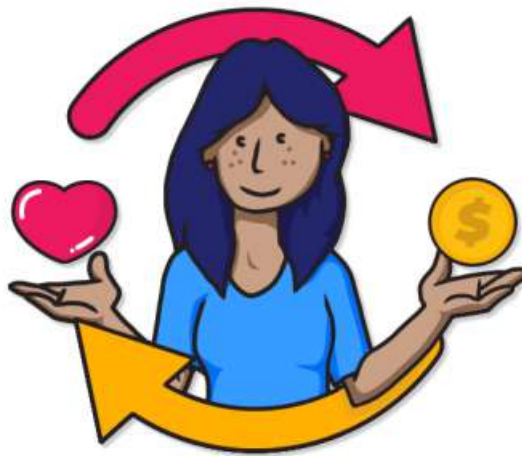
relieves muscle soreness due to over exertion, fatigue and exertion.

I have saved the best till last, Rapigel is for use on horses and dogs. (and humans) I have used Rapigel on my shoulder for bursitis and rub some in at night when my shoulder aches. It contains Camphor and Menthol which I have found also helps me fall back to sleep and all natural.

Rapigel is available from chemists and also from Vandepol's, Pet, Horse Farm supplies, Keilor East, Vic. Tel: 1300 362 326

Tea Tree Spray 125g Natural Tea Tree Oil (Australian made & owned) Antiseptic, antifungal deodoriser. Fantastic for use on feet and toes. I do not use Eucalyptus spray on my feet, I find it does not have the same result as Tea Tree Spray.

Michelle Raymond, Treasurer, PwMS-V Inc.



Getting on top of your finances can help in more ways than one.

 beyondblue.org.au/financial-wellbeing

Beyond Blue and Financial Counselling Australia (FCA) are encouraging people to access free support services to cope with the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

The organisations have launched the Money on Your Mind campaign to support people experiencing financial stress and mental health issues.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows 41 per cent of Australian businesses reported a decrease in revenue in August, while people who contact the National Debt Helpline and Beyond Blue continue citing the pandemic's effect on employment and income as a cause of stress.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman said unemployment, insecure work and financial stress and uncertainty are often linked to mental health issues. "Our jobs do more than put food on the table, they give us a sense of purpose and identity. So when we lose that, it's natural to feel worried and overwhelmed," Ms Harman said. "We know that job loss and financial stress can increase the risk of people developing mental health conditions, so it is vitally important to reach out early for support whether that's from a mental health professional or financial counsellor, or both.

"It's never too early or late to take control of your money and look after your mental health." FCA CEO Fiona Guthrie said, "seeking assistance is an important first step in getting your finances and mental well-being back on track."

"Financial counsellors are trained to help people who are feeling anxious about their finances and future. They can guide you through your options and rights," Ms Guthrie said.

Financial counsellors give free advice to people who are struggling with their finances and debt. They are different to financial planners and advisors. They don't lend money or advise people about how to invest.

A recent survey of financial counsellors conducted by Financial Counselling Australia showed:

- Financial counselling clients commonly report mental health issues. 83 per cent of financial counsellors said that "about half", "most" or "all" of their clients did so.
- Financial counsellors said more clients were reporting mental health issues since the pandemic began. 67 per cent said that the numbers of clients reporting mental health issues had either "increased a little bit" or "increased a lot".
- Financial counsellors reported people felt less stressed and more hopeful after receiving financial counselling. 97 per cent of financial counsellors either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with this statement.
- Financial counsellors said that financial hardship causes mental health to deteriorate. 75 per cent "strongly agreed" and 23 per cent "agreed".

For more information about Money on Your Mind and how to seek support, go to Beyond Blue's financial wellbeing page.

For free financial counselling call the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007.

The free Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service is available 24/7 at coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au or by calling 1800 512 348.



Presidents Letter

Spring 2020

Isn't nature wonderful! Here we are; all low and downcast because of the COVID19 lockdown and the parks and gardens have burst into their spring livery. The magnolias are in flower, the daffodils are blazing, the azaleas are coming out, the pittosporums are a profusion of scent, and the wattles are exploding with golden blossom. It is enough to put a smile on the most curmudgeonly face.

It is wonderful to see how this crisis has brought out the best in many people and how we are coming together without coming together. Many of us are having regular afternoon tea, or maybe a glass of wine, on ZOOM, and lots of us are seeing overseas family or distant friends on-line more often than ever before.

However, it is definitely not all good. The government clearly didn't adequately plan for the impact of the crisis on people with disabilities, and we have heard horror stories about people being left without adequate support. If you are in this situation it is important that you tell your story to the Disability Royal Commission. Anybody can make a submission in any way you feel comfortable – by telephone, email, video or through the Commission's website. Follow this link for more information

<https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/share-your-story>

Whilst I'm on the subject of support services the Government has very recently announced what it claims are the most significant changes to the NDIS

since its inception. These include the introduction of the Participant Service Guarantee and changes in response to the 2019 independent review of the NDIS Act.

The changes are intended to provide more choice and control over a flexible support package for people with a permanent and significant disability.

We hope the changes live up to this aim. If any of you are interested in finding out more about the changes and the guarantee go to: NDIA unveils NDIS road map for 2020-24.

Finally. don't forget we have a conference coming up at 10.30am on Saturday November 14th. It will be an on-line event and there will be two very interesting speakers; Dr Julia Morahan, Head of Research at MS Research Australia who will speak about "Current research into the cause, cure, and management of MS with particular emphasis on the exciting research being carried out in Australia".

And Debbie Roberts, Founder and CEO of "Data for Inclusion", and carer for her husband who has MS who will speak about "Exciting new technology which is affordable and can really make life easier for people with MS". Attendance will be free.

And we will be holding our AGM on ZOOM at 10.30am on Monday November 16th. For information about registering for the conference and the AGM see the notices in this newsletter.

Nigel Caswell, O.A.M., President of PwMS-Vic

Doctor, 47, with MS who lives in a nursing home

Former doctor Lydia - who lives with multiple sclerosis - hasn't left the nursing home she lives in since March this year. In that time she's experienced the loss of a family member, a fractured leg, and fascination by the science behind coronavirus. Here, she describes her life during the pandemic.

I'm 47 and a former doctor who has lived with multiple sclerosis for the past 27 years. For the past seven years of that I have been living in an aged-care nursing home. Since March 24th this year I haven't been able to leave the nursing home except for three times. The first time was to attend my 94-year-old Oma's (grandmother's) funeral, the second time was to visit an eye specialist and the third time was a short hospital admission after I fell off my shower chair and broke my leg. I've been imprisoned by COVID-19.

Prior to March 24th, I used to go out in a maxi-taxi approximately three times per week. I went to physiotherapy, singing lessons, to family lunches, to the movies and out for meals with family and friends. My life was busy and fun. I miss the outside world. Geez, I even miss traffic jams. I miss my family.

I miss my Oma. Her name was Anneliese. My dad's family migrated to Australia in 1954 from Achim, Germany. Oma was a resident in a Melbourne nursing home. She died on April 15th from long standing lung disease - she did not have COVID-19.

To deal with the grief as you can imagine, I felt very frustrated that I couldn't leave. But I've been keeping myself constantly busy with singing practice, Zoom physiotherapy and singing lessons, staying in touch with friends and family by phone, e-mail and text, listening to podcasts and audiobook novels and monthly zoom meetings with my local MS group.



As a former doctor, I have found this pandemic to be fascinating and frustrating.

I guess that I'd better tell you a little about my broken leg. Technically, I fractured the lower part of my right femur. I slid off my shower chair. I was transferred to the Austin hospital. I underwent orthopaedic surgery. My mum and sister could visit. Quick turn-around. I was back in the nursing home after three nights.

My leg is healing well. The long scar on my right thigh is healing well and I expect that one day it will be invisible. My right thigh is a bit less bulky.

I'm a doctor. I'm 46. And I live in a nursing home. I am concerned about suffering COVID-19 while living with MS. Of course, I am. I'm concerned that my usual function in a wheelchair may adversely be affected by COVID-19. I might experience significant COVID-19 related fatigue. I have a catheter for my urinary system. I shudder to think what COVID-19 would do there. Urinary tract infection is my concern.

'It's frustrating I can't help in this battle.'

But I hope that my age, lifestyle and lack of other health problems will assist me. I don't smoke and rarely consume alcohol. I have a healthy diet. I have regular physiotherapy on Zoom. All of these healthy habits should shield me from COVID-19 assault. COVID-19 is a brutal enemy. I can only hope for the best. I wish that I was working and helping the community at this time"

As a former doctor, I have found this pandemic to be fascinating and frustrating. And tragic, obviously. Super interesting medically. I wish that I was working and helping the community at this time. All I can do is watch this pandemic be managed by other people on TV. I feel frustrated that I can't help in this battle. I loved being a doctor. I love helping people.

I would like to urge the community to help lessen this threat of COVID-19 outbreak within nursing homes and outside. Be COVID-safe. Follow the rules set by public health authorities. Wear a mask in public. Sneeze or cough into your elbow. Wash your hands regularly. COVID-19 survives on surfaces for a period of time. Get tested for COVID-19 if you have any flu-like symptoms: a cough, runny nose, reduced taste and smell. Don't go to work if you feel unwell. Isolate at home if you have been tested. All of these measures will reduce community transmission of COVID-19. All of these measures reduce the COVID-19 risks to nursing homes. Taking on these simple tasks could save someone's life, potentially someone who lives with MS.

I feel like a caged animal. Melbourne's lockdown will cease one day. My relatives will be able to visit me for half an hour per week. With a beer. Far out. Now is the time for a beer. But I will only be allowed out when a vaccine is available. That is my assumption.



I eagerly watch every news bulletin about COVID-19 vaccines. I feel resigned to wait. I've predicted that I will not be free to go out until a COVID-19 vaccine is found. Despite my frustration, I find the science behind vaccines super interesting.

I expect that for the rest of 2020, I'll wait. Chin up. Trying hard to continue a busy and fun life. My physiotherapy and singing lessons are now on Zoom. I'm making sure to have 20 minutes of light in the courtyard most days. I'm listening to an excellent Australian novel called The Trauma Cleaner. I chat to my friends and family on the phone. On and on and on. I feel mentally strong. At this point.

Article thanks to:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/insight/doctor-47-with-ms-who-lives-in-a-nursing-home-it-s-frustrating-i-can-t-help-in-this-battle>

The Armchair Traveller - Svalbard

In some places, we leave home with masks, wallet or handbag and keys – but in this country it is illegal to leave home without a rifle due to roaming polar bears! Svalbard is a Norwegian archipelago between mainland Norway and the North Pole. One of the world's northernmost inhabited areas.

From the end of October to February it is dark for 24 hours a day and the average daytime high is below freezing for 8 months of the year. Svalbard is a harsh place yet many live in this part of Norway.



However, the good news is there are no cold viruses thanks to the extreme climate and the region has also so far been Coronavirus free, but strict quarantine and tourism restrictions have ensured this. It is also home of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault; a secure seed bank on the island of Spitsbergen, It was built to preserve a wide variety of seeds which are "spare" copies, held in case of the loss of seeds in other gene banks during large-scale or global crises.

This archipelago was historically mined for coal by Norway, Russia, and the United States, however the move away from coal by Norway has left the coal mines unworked. The economy has been shifting towards tourism, education, and research. Tourists can take trips on dog sleds or snowmobiles. Also, no VISA? Well in Svalbard it is not a problem and there is no customs border.

Indeed, if you are self-sufficient, you can stay and work for as long as you want. Few restrictions would of course suggest that the environment is harsh, and they do not expect a lot of immigration. Indeed, there are no maternity facilities and if people die, their remains are shipped out of the country. The population is very international, and the citizens are of working age.

Very few people will have heard or thought of Svalbard as a major world destination. It is more the destination of adventurous tourists now that mining coal has stopped. However, in the event of a global catastrophe, Svalbard will be on everyone's radar as the home of the Global Seed Vault.



MAKE THE SWITCH

Switch to a digital subscription of Short Circuit and you could win a \$100 gift voucher whilst saving the environment at the same time.

Last editions winner was: T. Islay
from Caroline Springs.



PwMS Vic Inc. is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient and a registered charity. Gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Privacy Policy is available from www.pwmsv.net.au/portal



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Last Short-Circuit we visited the desert regions of California, but Svalbard is the complete opposite, although parallels can be drawn regarding the challenges of living in harsh climates just from opposite perspectives. Longyearbyen is the main centre of Svalbard and has supermarkets, healthcare facilities, schools, hotels, shops, sports centres, public transport, library, and the local newspaper.

The town was named after John Munro Longyear, an American who established the Arctic Coal Company in 1906. One could be forgiven for thinking that the town was named by someone who went there to live and endured a “long year”. The centre has a population of near 3000. There are fascinating places to see in Svalbard available on You Tube including the abandoned Soviet mining town of Pyramiden, largely preserved by the extreme cold.

At the time of writing, Longyearbyen is a balmy 3 degrees C but feels like -3 degrees, with falling temperature as the seasons change, to the long winter to come. As our weather improves and we look forward to the easing of restrictions, we can only look at these destinations with some hope that one day we



will travel again. However, having endured our own “long year” in 2020, maybe a trip to the Artic Circle will not be on our travel bucket list.

Chris Platford

FRESH MEALS



I know you are bombarded with TV ads about meals and boxes of food being delivered to your home but I have found the best fresh cooked meals from Choice Fresh Meals. 1300 430 488.

This company is perfect for people at home either elderly or disabled and I am now both. The meals are delivered fresh and will last for 3 days in the fridge or can be frozen. The serves are quite large and they also deliver fresh milk, bread and sandwiches. Minimum order \$50.00 and you are not locked in but can order when you like. Check if they deliver in your area.

This is perfect for people who are not on the internet as they prefer you to order by phone 1300 430 488 and speak to a real person. Old fashioned service. You will need to be home for delivery and they will carry inside in plastic carry bags (not boxes) if you need help.

I also order from LITE N EASY as this can be ordered on line or by phone 13 15 12. When I first looked at LITE N EASY I found it very confusing and expensive, if you follow their meal plan it can work out quite expensive.

I have MS and as my mobility has become more difficult I now use a small Shoprider at home (best purchase).

Over the years the waistline has expanded and a Dietician recommended trying LITE N EASY but their meals in a bowl 1200 calories. The 5 pack of soups in a bowl cost \$17.00 and a 5 pack of meals in a bowl cost \$29.00. A four pack of desserts cost \$10.00 and are delicious. Minimum order \$50.00. No lock in contracts. I was quite surprised with the variety of meals and tasted lovely.

My 9 y/o grandson was able to choose a meal of Spaghetti Bolognese (\$5.80) from the freezer, lift the seal and put in the microwave for 4 minutes. This has been great for me as the grandkids can help themselves when they visit to an instant meal. Check when they deliver in your area.

NDIS approved and also myagedcare packages. Check with your case manager.

Meals on Wheels available through your local council also provide an excellent service with 3 courses and a juice delivered fresh to your door each day. But to be honest I have been spoilt with Choice Fresh Meals, no going back.

Michelle Raymond



**Continenence
Foundation
of Australia**

NATIONAL
CONTINENCE
HELPLINE

1800 33 00 66

Freecall our continence nurse advisors for information and advice on any bladder and bowel questions

- Need to know about funding for your products?
- Have some questions about faecal incontinence?
- Wondering if the products you're buying meet your needs?
- Need info on product disposal?

WHAT IS INCONTINENCE?

Incontinence describes any accidental or involuntary loss of:

- urine (wee) from the bladder – known as urinary incontinence
- faeces (poo) or flatus (wind) from the bowel – known as faecal incontinence.

Incontinence can range in severity from a small leak to complete loss of bladder or bowel control.

Incontinence can significantly impact a person's quality of life, but help is available.

The Continenence Foundation of Australia offers a wide variety of information in English and other languages covering:

- bladder, bowel and pelvic floor health
- tips for preventing and managing incontinence
- advice for carers
- support services and financial schemes that are available.

PwMS Vic Inc. is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient and a registered charity. Gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Privacy Policy is available from www.pwmsv.net.au/portal



People with Multiple Sclerosis Victoria Inc.
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**People with MS
Victoria Inc
Annual Confernece**

**“Living with MS”
Conference**

Saturday 14th November,
10.30am – 12.30pm
Online Event - Facebook.com/pwmsv

**LIVE
STREAMED**

Saturday 14th Nov
from 10:30AM

Follow us on
facebook.com/pwmsv

2 Key Speaker Sessions

**Technology
That Really Helps
+
Research**

The two speaker sessions will be preceded. all online
www.pwmsv.net.au/portal

**BOOK
NOW**

ATTENDANCE IS FREE ----- BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL

To enquire about a booking, or assistance contact:

Email: msraymond@optusnet.com.au – or- Mob: 0435 085 827

People with MS – Victoria Notice of

2020 Annual General Meeting

Date, Monday 16 th November; Time, 10.30am to 11.30aam

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of previous AGM (Nov 2019)
4. Correspondence
5. President's Report
6. Treasurer's report
7. Appointment of Auditor for 2020-2021
8. Any other business

Note; because of COVID19 we are holding this meeting on-line via ZOOM. Copies of the previous minutes, correspondence schedule, president's report, and treasurer's report will be posted on our website prior to the meeting.

Attendance; anyone living with MS in Victoria is welcome to attend. To attend register your interest including details of your preferred email address at admin@pwms-v.org.au by Monday November 9th. Registrants will then be sent a link to the ZOOM meeting.



Providing information, referral
and support to people with
Multiple Sclerosis.