

## Purple Walk for Endometriosis Awareness



It's the time of year again to have a hunt through your wardrobe for your purple threads and head along to the Hamilton Lake on March 8 for the annual Purple Walk for Endometriosis.

Each year in early March, Hamilton Lake attracts around 500 people, spectacularly dressed in purple and accompanied by their equally well-dressed dogs. While the event is fun, with plenty of prizes and goodie bags, the cause the walk supports is a serious one.

Endometriosis has extraordinarily long diagnostic delays, with many women being diagnosed through fertility problems, after experiencing symptoms in teenage years.

Educator Annette Evens from Insight Endometriosis says women of all ages need to seek help as soon as period pain begins to affect lifestyle.

"Our research has found long diagnostic delays of up to 15 years – often because women and teen girls 'normalise' the pain until it becomes overwhelming" says Annette.

Insight Endometriosis has a support group especially for young women including teens. This age group faces issues of absenteeism and isolation, and it is important that they feel supported through the diagnostic process and become well-informed about treatment options and appropriate lifestyle changes.

Insight Endometriosis provide evidence-based information to help women and teen girls make informed decisions about treatment options and lifestyle changes, as well as community support so women and their families aren't left facing a significant health problem in isolation.

Insight Endometriosis also empowers women with evidence-based information, community support and through a range of programmes including free evening seminars, one-on-one education appointments and support group meetings.

Kiriana Isgrove is the Young Women's Support Group Coordinator for Insight Endometriosis. Last year while studying for her masters, Kiriana wanted to sign up to do some volunteering. She saw an advertisement for the coordinator position at Insight Endometriosis, and it was a perfect fit because she was just going through the process herself of being identified as having endometriosis.

"I understand what it is like to need support. As a young woman, it feels like not many people understand what you are going through. Endometriosis can be very isolating," says Kiriana.

Having an organisation like Insight Endometriosis means women are not alone when dealing with the symptoms of endometriosis.

"The Young Women's Support Group has a number of events each year and a Facebook page. If you are a young woman who is affected by period pain, you have a support network here to help you," says Kiriana.

The Purple Walk is a fun way to reduce diagnostic delays and bring the wider community together to support those affected and open up conversations about what is sometimes a difficult topic to discuss.

To register for The Purple Walk or to find out more, visit [www.purplewalk.co.nz](http://www.purplewalk.co.nz)

For more information on endometriosis visit: [www.InsightEndometriosis.org.nz](http://www.InsightEndometriosis.org.nz)

Entry is \$5 per person and open to those aged 13 and over.

Kids and dogs are welcome to just come along and join in the fun!