

Surviving Severe M.E.

By Claire Wade on behalf of the Association of Young People with M.E.

Reviewed by Zoë Blamire

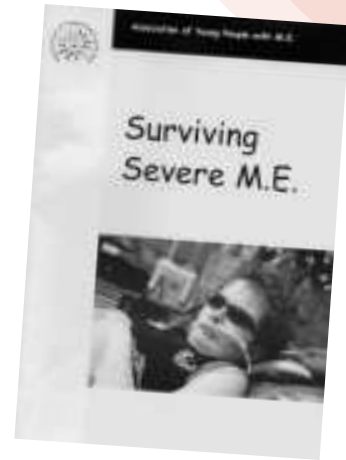
AYME member Claire Wade has drawn on personal experience supported by patient-led advice to write this resource for young people severely affected by M.E. Dr Nigel Speight, paediatric expert and hero to many young M.E. sufferers, wrote the foreword.

The packed 30-page A4 booklet does not shy away from the harsh reality of living with severe M.E. but at the same time the tone remains reassuring. At the worst stages of illness it will be the carers who turn to this booklet for advice. Their worries such as what to give the patient to eat or how to ease light and noise sensitivities are addressed by the constructive advice given, bringing hope at times when the situation often seems hopeless. The devastating consequences of severe M.E. such as being unable to wash or even eat in a conventional way are sensitively discussed and tube feeding is covered in detail.

I felt that the reality of the cover photo may be upsetting for some children and I found lurid yellow cover off-putting. My only other criticism would be that the text is quite small, but each section is very accessible and easy to read. I thought the drawings showing how to sit or lie in bed comfortably to avoid stressing already painful muscles were excellent.

Aside from all the practical advice on dealing with symptoms, Claire has lots of suggestions for games and crafts that can be done in bed. She feels that the only limit is your imagination and has even made her own virtual holiday CD-Rom.

Although written for young people, adults with M.E. will find many of the resources relevant and the advice useful. For those with access to the Web there is a vast directory of sites for information and shopping; everything from ready-prepared meals to talking books and craft supplies.



The strength of this booklet is in its successful merging of information and advice from Claire's severely affected friends at AYME. Without doubt they are the only people who can tell it like it really is and pass on what works for them.

The guide costs £10 plus £2 P&P; send cheques to AYME Ltd, Box 605, Milton Keynes, MK2 2XD

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WHICH? MAGAZINE BEST BUY

On Eagle's Wings – A Christian Perspective on M.E.

By Hazel Stapleton, published by Quinta Press.

The author, who's been badly affected by M.E. for 14 years, aims to give information about the illness – including practical advice – from a Christian viewpoint, to help others who are affected.

Available from the publisher for £4.00 (including P&P). Write to Quinta Press, Meadow View, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7RN, tel: 01691 778659, or e-mail: info@quintapress.com

Credit card orders accepted.



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M.E.-FRIENDLY HOLIDAYS IN CYPRUS (Paphos). Perfect for recuperation and sun therapy! Beautiful villas/cottages with private pools. Wheelchair-friendly. Assistance available: luggage/transfer. Tel.020 84406219; irenhare@btinternet.com

TYNE VALLEY M.E./CFS SUPPORT GROUP For understanding, mutual support and a friendly welcome plus monthly meetings. Visit www.TVME.org.uk or contact Joy on 0795 023664 11am-7pm (she will call back to minimise costs) or Steve on 0191 414 8895 after 11am.

MENORCA WINTER SUN Stylish two-bed (sleeps four) first-floor maisonette in Ciutadella. Excellent location, minutes to sea promenade, beautiful harbour and lovely medieval town centre with bars and restaurants. £130 per week. Also available other times of the year. Tel. Pat on 020 7241 4786 (pm only) for photos and information.

CHI MACHINE Myself and local M.E. group members have benefited from using the original Sun Ancon chi machine. Involves lying flat on floor with feet on machine. Works by oxygenating blood and improving lymphatic function. Use in home. Clinically trialled on lymphoedema (Australia) Costs £310. For more info, tel. 0845 345 0934 or visit www.thechimachine.co.uk/sarah

ISLE OF SKYE quality self-catering bungalow. Wheelchair-friendly. Sleeps 4, both bedrooms en suite; step-free shower with sturdy lift-up seat. Comfortable, warm and well-equipped. Spectacular loch and sea view. Peaceful area. Car essential. Sorry, no pets. Hazel Wotton Tel/fax: 01470-592369; www.greenbankonskye.co.uk

MAGNOTHERAPY From aches and pains to fatigue. Bioflow magnetic products maximise the powerful effects of magnetism on the body. For further information contact fellow M.E. sufferer and Independent Ecoflow Distributor Sue Evans. Tel. 01296 415309 or e-mail philinsue@ntlworld.com

LAKE DISTRICT Four self-catering holiday suites on Dewentwater near Keswick. English Tourism Council 'Three Star'. Fully furnished and well equipped. Central heating included in tariff. One suite is ground floor. Available all year. A 10% discount for members of Action for M.E. Further details: Mary Bull, Derwent House Holidays, Stone Heath, Hilderstone, Staffordshire, ST15 8SH. Tel. 01889 505678. Fax 01889 505679. Web: www.dhholidays-lakes.com E-mail thebulls@globalnet.co.uk