

KIRSTY BONFIELD

SPINAL LEAKER STORY



“Life changed with the arrival of our daughter. A perfect little bundle of cute! This was the happiest and hardest day of our lives...”

www.csfleak.info/profiles/kirstyboundy

A bit about me and what life was like before:

My name is Kirsty. I am 33, I am a stay at home mum and I live in Devon with my husband and 3 year old daughter Graicie. Life before my CSF leak was fast paced including working full time, keeping fit including swimming each day, planning long distance cycles for charity, studying complementary science therapy at university and travelling around the world when pennies and time would allow!



How My Leak Started

On 20th October 2014 life changed with the arrival of our daughter Graicie. After 20 hours in labour and Graicie facing the wrong way it was decided that an epidural would be the best way to deliver Graicie safely. Three attempts were made to place the epidural needle, unfortunately the needle had gone too far causing CSF fluid to leak out of the epidural site and no drugs could be administered. Graicie arrived an hour later along with the best cup of tea I had tasted but also accompanied with the worst head pain I had experienced.

Treatment for my Leak

I managed to get home after a day and night in hospital with the hope that the CSF leak would heal on its own after a few days of laying flat. This was not the case and three days after Graicie was born I was admitted back to hospital by the midwife for an epidural blood patch. Unfortunately after a few hours lying flat in hospital the headache still remained and the consultants felt that was all they could do at present and I was sent home to wait it out and hope for improvement.

The head pain improved slightly over the next few weeks but did not resolve fully so a referral from the GP for a blood patch was the next step. But a mix up with notes unfortunately meant long delays...

Fast-forward fourteen more GP appointments, prescriptions of various drugs and five physiotherapist appointments. I requested my hospital notes. I managed to find out and see the consultant who performed the previous blood patch. Two years had passed so various MRI scans were performed and cerebellar tonsil decent was noted. No leak was seen on the scan and my local neurologist gave me the diagnoses of migraines and to take paracetamol. All they felt they could offer was nerve blocks to try and mask the pain.

CSF LEAK

Research shows that at least **5 in 100,000** people each year are affected by spontaneous CSF leaks, with many more suffering from iatrogenic or traumatic CSF leaks. They are not rare, yet are generally under-diagnosed; misdiagnosis of migraine, sinusitis, NPDH, tension and other headache disorders is common place, and on average correct diagnosis takes 13 months from onset.

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This was a low point for me and I was forced to give up work, studying a master's degree in nutrition and swimming that I loved. I felt that life had stopped. I had a course of hypnotherapy that helped a lot with the fear and sadness I was feeling of loosing my previous exciting life. It taught me that life is still happening, I can be happy and to appreciate the good things in life.

Life Now....

In July 2017 we found out we were expecting another baby and in August 2017 I saw a new consultant. For the first time I was filled with hope that there is a possibility my leak may heal, and if not, that a plan will be put in place for me.

You can read more leaker profiles at: www.csfleak.info/profiles



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