

BAM NEWSLETTER



Happy Flush Helping Raise Awareness of B.A.M

This month on Social Media we were very thankful to Happy Flush for advertising BAM Support UK and the story of our very own Committee Member Alex Hardwick.

BAM awareness and Alex's story was shared across Facebook and Twitter in hope to get the word spread about BAM/BAD. Here is the story if you missed it.

Welcome to our next part of our Care to be aware campaign, raising awareness of conditions affecting the bowel.

This time we are hoping to create more awareness of a condition that many of you may not have heard of before – B.A.M – Bile Acid Malabsorption. The symptoms are similar to IBS and the right help can make a big difference to sufferers of B.A.M.

Thank you to Alex Hardwick who suffers from B.A.M and is also Social Secretary of B.A.M Support UK. Alex has chosen to share his story and answer some questions from us to help raise awareness. Details of how you can contact him are at the bottom of this sponsored post.

My story with B.A.M – Bile Acid Malabsorption

“Bile Acid Malabsorption and Bile Acid Diarrhoea is a degenerative bowel disorder that has a big impact on day to day life. Primary BAM/BAD is widely undiagnosed and because of very similar symptoms it's often passed off as IBS. Secondary BAM/BAD is present in inflammatory bowel disorders and with Gallbladder removal.

There is currently no cure for BAM/BAD but it can be managed a lot better by being on the right medication, getting information on how to deal with the condition and following the right diet. I myself have suffered with BAM for as long as I can remember - since childhood.

I spent three decades being told that I had IBS(d) and suffered badly from chronic diarrhoea and many other medical conditions related to my condition. Like a lot of other people with IBS symptoms I feel as though IBS is used as a bracket to put you in if you have certain symptoms and you're just told to go away and deal with it! It was when I was in my late 20's that I got really bad and was constantly passing blood, very watery yellow stools and had such urgency to get to the toilet within 60 seconds that I decided enough was enough and started yet again another IBS investigation.

I moved counties and went to University Hospital Coventry where I met a gastroenterologist who diagnosed me with Type 2 BAD and a High Motility Disorder. It was a huge life changing moment where I was given the right medication and my symptoms changed dramatically. This was only possible with the right understanding of the doctors and the use of the SEHCAT scanner that they use to help diagnose BAD. Don't get me wrong, BAD doesn't go away, you do have to live and cope with it but it is made so much easier when you understand what it is and how you can manage it.

I am the social secretary of B.A.M Support UK. We support others with BAM and give information to help others and raise awareness.”



Q.How does BAM affect daily life?

“Chronic diarrhoea is a very painful, embarrassing and debilitating condition causing numerous episodes of watery and urgent bowel motions sometimes resulting in faecal accidents. It’s very hard to predict how and when you will need the toilet and often need to go urgently which makes car journeys and commuting a nightmare for work. Some people have to give up on their careers as it’s difficult to work in some jobs with the symptoms. There are a lot of other side effects to the condition that have to be managed on a day to day basis that make things very difficult:

- excessive wind
- painful stomach cramps
- moderate to severe bloating
- tiredness and low energy levels
- nausea and indigestion
- joint pain and muscle weakness
- weight gain
- anxiety and feeling low in mood
- lack of concentration “foggy head”
- shortness of breath
- feeling extremely unwell
- inability to exercise due to lack of stamina “

Q.What can an employer do to help an employee with B.A.M?

“Telling your employer that you have BAM/BAD is important and making them aware of what BAM/BAD is, will be beneficial as they may be able to help and support you with your work. For example: Being flexible with your hours, making time up if you are ill. Being late by a few minutes as you couldn’t get off the toilet that morning. Making disabled toilets accessible for you. If you’re in an office environment, then a hot water bottle and a cushion can help comfort and you could even be discreet by putting a certain object on your desk as a sign for your boss to say that you’re not well.”

Q. How can friends and family help?

“Encourage your friend to be open with you so that you can understand BAM and how it affects their life. Adapt and help your friend. Make sure you always have lots of loo paper when your friend visits and be prepared for him/her to have to dash off to the loo mid conversation! You may also need to watch their children when you are out together if they have to dash off to the loo! Don’t encourage your friend to eat any type of food just because you are, he/she will not be able to eat certain foods so don’t put pressure on them to eat the same as you. As a family, you should be the most supportive and understanding. You will need to adjust to help your loved one. Listen to them and ask what he/she needs so that you can help and understand. Sometimes, smaller things may not be obvious so be supportive and ask. Understanding is very important; for example, if he/she has a sleep for 20 minutes or a shower at your house, it may be something he/she needs to do that day. If your loved one doesn’t live at the same house as you, keep some medication, change of clothes and little day to day bits handy for when they drop by.”

Q. What can you do to help a partner with BAM/BAD?

“You should be their rock and the one person who understands and knows them the most. Being barged out of the toilet by your partner in the morning rush because he/she can’t wait and letting them lie in to get the kids up when they are ill are just small things but mean a lot to your partner. When they are having a flare up and need time alone or in the bathroom, then you should understand and give them the space they need at that time. Find out what medication your partner is on and be aware of their ups and downs.”

FURTHER INFORMATION: “There’s lots of info for everyone at www.bamsupportuk.org. You can download info to take to your GP, check out people’s stories, learn about the different types of BAM/BAD and how to cope. There are Facebook forums too for people with the condition, BAM Support UK where people talk openly without being judged and can share anything.

Final message from Alex: Don’t be alone and hide it from others. Silent Disabilities need to be expressed. Take your RADAR key out and about with you and use it - you are entitled to.”

On Facebook visit @HappyFlushAirFreshener and share to help raise awareness.



Happy Flush 'just before' Air Freshener



To purchase Happy Flush Air Fresheners, visit www.happyflush.com where you can purchase these great products.

Available are their 3 different size bottles;

- The 'hand bag' size 25ml Pocket bottle
 - The Bathroom ready 50ml bottle
 - The Family size 100ml bottle
- or you can buy all 3 in a combi pack.

With 6 great scents to choose from;

- Citrus Burst
- Lime Fizz
- Orange Zing
- Rose Bloom
- Mint Breeze
- Apple Twist



Have you visited our shop?



Online at www.bamsupportuk.org/shop.html you can purchase **RADAR Keys** and **Just Can't Wait toilet cards**.

There are two types of keys available. The economy key with a smaller head, which is easy to put on your keys or the standard head which has a bigger head and easier to turn, also easier to find in a busy handbag!

BAM Support UK Toilet cards are for you to be able to discretely request the use of a non-public toilet.



Standard Key - £6.50

Economy Key - £6.00



Toilet Card - £3.00



Have you heard about....

'There are no catches or hidden charges and BAM Support UK will be really grateful for your donations'



easyfundraising.org.uk
feel good shopping

Do you shop online?

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online - from your weekly shop to your annual holiday - you could be collecting free donations for BAM Support UK? Donate while you shop with www.easyfundraising.org.uk, its **free** and will not cost you a penny, with over 3000 stores taking part, raise money for BAM Support UK every time you shop. **It's That Easy!**

How does it work?

Step 1: Head over to

<https://new.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bamsupportuk> and join for free. Don't forget to download the App.

Step 2: Every time you shop online

Go to easyfundraising **first** or log on the app, find the site you want and start shopping.

Step 3: After you've checked out

The retailer will make a donation to **BAM Support UK** for no extra cost whatsoever!

Next Meeting - BAM Support UK Coventry Support Group

The next meeting will be held on,

Friday 1st September 2017

5.30pm - 7.30pm
CSB, University Hospital,
Coventry.

Please feel free to just turn up but it would be appreciated if you could e-mail us to and let us know you will be attending, so we to have an idea of numbers and a big enough room for everyone.

Please e-mail:
chairman@bamsupportuk.org



Please bring your own drinks as refreshments are not supplied currently.

There is also charge for using the car park.



Top Tips & Tricks

Vitamin B Complex Drops Purchased from Holland and Barrett

Carol says - I have just bought my Vit B Complex drops for under the tongue, usually £8.49 each, and I got two bottles for £8.50p, with the penny sale. I use the Solgar Biotin vegecaps 5000ug, I swear by them for my hair, skin and nails. They are just one a day and so worth it as I've had so many problems. They work for me (but we are all different!).

Almond Milk Rude Health from Sainsburys

Carol said – I have been trying out various Almond Milks. I have found that the long life one by Rude Health is marvellous. Organic, dairy free, unsweetened, with rice, no thickeners, gluten free so easier to digest, and delicious. The best thing of all is that I've been having a quarter of a pint morning and afternoon and it's actually binding me. I can hardly believe it. I still take my meds but it really is helping. I realise it's not for everyone but worth a try perhaps. I get mine in Sainsbury's. Refrigerate after opening.



Writing for the Newsletter

We want your story! We are looking for people to write an article or their story that we can post on our website and feature in our newsletter. We would like people to share their experience with BAM and how a proper diagnosis and medication has helped, we know

from attending the meeting and hearing other people's stories really helped others when they were first diagnosed with BAM, so can you help us help others?

Please send your story to;
admin@bamsupportuk.org