

In early 2016 I became quite unwell after surfing at Ocean Grove main beach. In the previous 24 hours there were heavy rains with runoff from the lands around and upstream of Barwon River which consequently flowed out onto Ocean Grove Main Beach.

I was very sick for a number of days so the Doctor ordered blood tests and stool sample tests. The results came back clear of anything but I remained sick. In the months to come I ended up at a gastroenterologist who recommended a colonoscopy and endoscopy both of which came back clear. The gastroenterologist suspected that I had Irritable Bowel Syndrome and that I should see a dietitian to help with the symptoms. I did see a dietitian and we worked on a FODMAP diet to try and limit irritants to my gut and bowel which were making me unwell. The unwellness gradually became intermittent and after about two years on the modified diet I have become fairly healthy again. I have never had allergies and some of the foods and drinks I have had all my life my gut can no longer tolerate.

I have been healthy all my life and had not experienced anything like this. Our young family moved to Ocean Grove in 2012. I used to surf a lot, however, in the last four years (after I became ill) I have only surfed once and I felt sick after that.

The doctors and dietitians have no explanation as to what brought this sickness on.

After reading information about the numerous health concerns people have experienced in the Barwon Heads/Ocean Grove/Bellarine Peninsula area related to the mosquito spraying regime I wonder if my sickness and gut health was damaged from mosquito spray runoff into the Barwon River which flows out and onto Ocean Grove main beach.