

## Information About Chemical Sensitivity

Over 40 million people in the U.S. are sensitive to everyday chemicals, including fragrances, laundry detergents, hairspray, toiletries, and cleaning supplies. (By comparison, there are 17 million diabetics in the United States.)

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), also called Environmental Illness (EI), is a medical condition caused by exposure to chemicals in the person's environment. A person with MCS experiences symptoms triggered by any and every chemical in much smaller doses than detected by most healthy individuals.

Symptoms include migraines; breathing difficulty; irritation to eyes, throat and skin; nausea; incoordination; confusion; heart palpitations; dizziness; tremors; blurred vision; slurred speech; aching joints or muscles; rashes; and restricted swallowing.

Avoiding scents and chemicals is a crucial necessity, not merely a preference.

If you can smell a fragrance, you are being exposed to its harmful ingredients, even if you do not yet have noticeable symptoms. More people are becoming scent-aware and desire nonscented surroundings even if they don't immediately become ill from chemicals and fragrances.

The National Academy of Sciences reports that 95 percent of chemicals used in fragrances today are synthetic compounds derived from petroleum. Six hundred or more chemicals may be used in a single scent and can cause cancer, asthma, and birth defects.

Perfume is composed of many of the same chemicals named on the Environmental Protection Agency's hazardous waste list. The perfume industry is not regulated. They can put any number of chemicals in a fragrance without revealing what those chemicals are, or how they affect humans.

Fresh air does not smell like White Shoulders, Old Spice, Bounce, or Glade.

For more information on the dangers of fragrances and everyday chemicals:

\* Environmental Health Network of California in Larkspur 415-541-5075  
[www.ehnca.org](http://www.ehnca.org)

\* Fragranced Products Information Network  
[www.ameliaww.com/fpin/fpin.htm](http://www.ameliaww.com/fpin/fpin.htm)

\* Melissa Kaplan's Chronic Neuroimmune Diseases: MCS  
[www.anapsid.org/cnd/mcs](http://www.anapsid.org/cnd/mcs)

This document is available online at [www.anapsid.org/cnd/mcs/fragfree.html](http://www.anapsid.org/cnd/mcs/fragfree.html)

