

Chemical Sensitivity & Scent Information

Chemical Sensitivity or MCS is a chronic health condition involving adverse reactions to chemicals and other irritants.

Many everyday products contain chemicals, which increase the risk of getting MCS, & deny people access to public places/events. Products such as pesticides, perfume/cologne, air fresheners, cleaning products, tobacco smoke, scented personal-care products, scented laundry products, including fabric softeners/dryer sheets, new carpet/new paint/solvents such as caulk, etc. **There are over 500 potential chemicals that can be used under the single name “*fragrance*” found on the label of many products, not just perfumes and colognes.**

Twenty to thirty percent of the US population already reacts to one or more synthetic chemical substances. Three to four percent of the US population is currently disabled with chemical sensitivity. Chemical sensitivity is also known as MCS, TILT, or Environmental Illness.

For folks with this condition, the detoxification system is impaired, causing them to have reactions at dosage levels that would be less of a problem for healthy individuals with normal detoxification. Genetics, but more commonly past toxic exposure, medications, chronic lyme disease can all contribute to MCS (chemical sensitivity).

Many symptoms are invisible, can be immediate or delayed, and range from mild to severe, including: **Breathing difficulties, headaches/sinus pain, confusion/impaired speech, fatigue, anxiety, depression, nausea, joint pain.** People try to limit exposures to reduce/minimize the symptoms Repeated exposures can make people sick, more sensitive and make the symptoms more severe.

Ingredients banned from cosmetics, US: 10, European Union: 1,100+ Manufacturers are not required to list ingredients on the labels of these products, nor do they have to reveal the specific ingredients that qualify as “fragrance” to regulating authorities because they are protected as trade secrets.

To learn more about chemical sensitivity or TILT (Toxicant-induced loss of tolerance) go to youtube and type in search box: Dr. Grace Ziem to watch two videos, each one is only 8 minutes each. **Chemical Sensitivity and Injury: Interview with Dr. Grace Ziem - Pt. 1 and Pt. 2.** Learn how folks can get it, symptoms, ways to avoid it, and treatments.

Other Websites for more information:

<http://baystatebanner.com/news/2012/feb/07/toxins-found-in-black-hair-care-products/>

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/11/27/toxic-perfume-chemicals.aspx>

<http://www.chemicalsensitivityfoundation.org/>

<http://www.chemicalinjury.net/> Dr. Grace Ziem’s website

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Ways to reduce the chemicals you're using

Here are ways to reduce the scents you're using. **To be more fragrance free – the product has no added scent, so “perfume” or “fragrance” will not be listed in ingredients.**

- Avoid strong scents, such as perfume & cologne. Use products that are fragrance free and have no chemicals. Avoid using fabric softener and dryer sheets since these products are very toxic and cling to clothing.

Health food stores sell fragrance free and chemical free products, such as Whole Foods, Harvest Co-op, etc. On the web, vitacost, luckyvitamin, swansonvitamins sell fragrance free products. Some products at drugstores listed as fragrance free have chemicals that are toxic. **EWG.org - to find safer products.** Note: Fragrance chemicals are absorbed through the skin.

Below are some Fragrance Free options, many of these are cheap & work well:

Soap - baking soda (wet skin and apply baking soda using a face cloth)

Avoid Dove – unscented Dove has chemicals in it. **Fragrance free Soaps:** Sappo soap - 2 of them are frag. Free, clearly natural unscented glycerin soap, Trader Joe's oatmeal and honey soap (it doesn't say frag free, but it is, since the smell is from natural oatmeal & honey), Kiss my face frag. free olive oil soap

Deodorant – baking soda, crystal rock

Body/hair moisturizer - olive oil (or any unscented oil such as coconut oil, almond oil, jojoba oil, etc. Oils are best used/absorbed when the skin is damp after a shower.

Laundry detergent: 365 2X concentrated laundry detergent unscented (sold at whole foods), Planet laundry detergent unscented, Ecos Laundry Detergent Free & Clear unscented

Aftershave alternatives: aloe vera gel, cold water, witch hazel, 50% rubbing alcohol, apple cider vinegar-full strength or dilute w/ equal parts water or witch hazel, drinking alcohols like vodka or rum - can add aloe.

Please Note:

Essential oils, especially if they're not organic can cause problems for folks with chemical sensitivity; those products will not indicate fragrance free, since they are not.

Alternatives to fabric softener and dryer sheets:

- Use baking soda with your regular laundry detergent instead of using fabric softener.
- Use white vinegar in the rinse cycle or put vinegar on an old sock and throw in the dryer this will reduce static cling instead of using dryer sheets.