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Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

Escaping
A Toxic World:
Treating and
Preventing MCS

Solution Guide to
Multiple Chemical
Sensitivity

Pollutant-Free
Eating for MCS

Beating Multiple
Chemical Sensitivities
with Fitness

Complete Relief
from MCS Disease

HomeCures *That Work*

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

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Solution Guide to Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

by Dr. Scott Saunders, M.D.

Robin had to move several times in the past two years because she is so sensitive. Her first house in Santa Barbara had a lot of new work done. There was an addition put on with new carpeting, which she found was leaching formaldehyde. So, she had to leave.

Robin then moved to a "clean" condominium with wood floors and all-natural furniture. But, the gardeners were spraying weed-killer and fertilizer – so she had to move again.

This time, she moved to another home where she could control her environment. Unfortunately, the next-door neighbor was covering her garden with bug spray, which drifted over the fence. This made Robin feel fatigued and ill.

Finally, Robin moved out of town. But thanks to industrialization, chemical toxicity is everywhere. If only avoidance were as simple as it sounds. For Robin, it is almost impossible to navigate the world without being immersed in tens of thousands of potentially troublesome human-made chemicals to which she reacts.

Chemical companies no longer deny that chemicals accumulate in our bodies, simply by virtue of being alive. While the too-low concentrations of those chemicals supposedly exist to cause any harm, MCS would suggest otherwise. The brutal sensitivity to the cumulative effects of these interacting chemicals causes extreme suffering. These can begin to have many adverse symptoms that slow or prevent normal functions of the body. People with MCS can be sensitive to anything, and it can change over time, trapping them in a modern, chemical world.

Medical Doctors and MCS

Mainstream medicine doesn't recognize MCS as a real disease, having failed to agree on a case definition for the disease. This makes getting a diagnosis a battle. Many doctors consider it an emotional or psychological problem.

Studies have failed to recognize any consistency in symptoms, diagnosis, or treatment. A person with MCS may have reactions to a chemical at one time, and not another. Furthermore, different people respond differently to each type of chemical stimulus. Moreover, both the severity of the reaction and the types of sensitivities change over time.^[1]

The problem with the way we do research is that by using groups of people we assume they are similar, when, in this case, none of them are. The factors responsible for MCS are numerous, including the function of multiple enzymes and detox pathways, as well as the burden of various toxins already in the body. All of this changes continuously, making quantification of sensitivity very difficult.

What is Multiple Chemical Sensitivity?

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is just what the name implies. People are sensitive to many things in their environment, food, or even their own waste. This is brought on by a broad array of everyday chemicals. Exposure levels far below those that seem to affect the rest of the population provoke the symptoms.

The experience of each person is constantly changing, due to the environment. These are better and worse over time, due to a wide range of toxins. MCS has been equated to other problems including:

- Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS)
- Fibromyalgia
- Sick building syndrome
- Gulf war syndrome (GWS)

Symptoms of MCS may include:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Muscle stiffness
- Joint pain
- Inability to concentrate
- Sleep problems
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Food intolerances
- Difficulty breathing

These and other symptoms may come on during exposure to certain substances, and they go away when avoiding problem chemicals and exposure.^[2]

Causes of MCS

Of course, a multi-factorial illness will not have a single cause. There are many factors which lead to this problem, most of which may include:

- Drugs
- Adrenal fatigue
- Poor digestion of food
- Yeast overgrowth
- Inadequate absorption of nutrients
- Leaky gut syndrome
- Hormone imbalances
- Stress
- Genetic detoxification weaknesses
- Dysbiosis (bad bacteria in the intestines)
- Immune dysfunction
- Emotional factors
- Celiac disease
- Viral infections
- Previous chemical exposures
- Heavy metals
- Food allergies



MCS Diagnosis

While we can test for the problems above, none of the tests are diagnostic for MCS. People may test positive for Leaky Gut Syndrome, for example, but do not have MCS. Diagnosing MCS is purely clinical. It's the patient who comes in with the diagnosis, having noticed that they are sensitive to many different things.

- Some of these sensitivities may be perfectly natural, such as an actual deficiency in amino acids due to incomplete breakdown of proteins in the digestive system.
- Others may be sensitive to toxic substances such as alcohol, dyes, or pesticides.
- Still others are sensitive to smells. The actual molecule that stimulates the olfactory (smell) system isn't big enough to create an immune reaction. However, even natural perfumes may create a debilitating reaction.

Since these sensitivities are not usually created by the immune system, they are not true allergies. This is why allergy testing is not useful. Moreover, the actual sensitivity may change over time. For all these reasons, we rely on the patient to notice environmental triggers of their symptoms.

The Shoe Factory

Karen had MCS for a couple of years as a result of her job in a shoe factory. After working there several months, she began to notice that when she went to work she got tired and achy. She would get fatigued. She began to have headaches and dizziness. Her eyes hurt, and she would get shortness of breath with only walking.

Since she was in her 30s and usually active, she wondered why this only happened at work. After a period of time, she found that when she just walked into the building she would immediately start feeling her symptoms. She thought she must be crazy, and maybe she was just stressed at work, but she liked her job, and was generally happy there.

After months of getting worse, she finally was unable to go to work, and decided to take a leave of absence so she went out on disability. It took about six months of treatment for her to feel normal

again, but when she tried to go back, she got the same symptoms. She had to quit her job, and find another that allowed her to be away from the glues and offgassing of the shoe factory.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Treatment

So, this begs the question about getting relief from MCS. Do people really have to move multiple times, avoid contact with others, leave their work, severely limit their diet, or live in a bubble all their lives? No.

The Liver is Key

Our liver serves to process and remove all the useless chemicals in our bodies. Some of these chemicals are byproducts from our normal metabolic processes – our own waste. Others chemicals have no function in our bodies. Some are very toxic, while others are very benign. Nevertheless, the liver sorts out the good from the bad and breaks almost everything down into parts that can be excreted primarily in urine, feces, and sweat.

When the liver becomes so overloaded with harmful chemicals that the liver's enzymes can no longer cope, the toxins build up and this then manifests itself in a specific disease state such as MCS. There are multiple factors that lead to this vicious cycle of chronic toxic overload.

Let's take the example of stress.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity and Stress

Stress is never the cause of an illness. Emotional stress, physical stress, chemical stress, and so forth are perfectly natural and normal to every person on the planet. Our bodies are designed to adapt or compensate for the effects of stress. However, once a certain amount of adaptation or weakness occurs, symptoms appear under stress.

A simple analogy is to take a Popsicle stick and start bending it. As we put more stress on the stick, eventually it will break at the weakest point. In the same way, bodies manifest disease at the weakest point when stressed. If the weakness is migraines, people get more headaches. If it is IBS they get more diarrhea, and so forth. Thus, stress will also bring out a weakness in those who are sensitive to chemicals in their environment. The weakness, however, is already there, and may be caused by many other factors. Therefore, working on only the stress may help, but doesn't really deal with the problem. Ideally, we need to find the cause of the weakness, and fix it.

It is different for each person, because each person's stress capacity is different. At the weakness, there is insufficient energy to maintain health. This may occur after a few minutes or a few years depending on the intensity of the stress and the health of the body. At this point, some body system becomes dysfunctional. The symptom depends upon the individual pattern of adaptation. The body's ability to cope with stress is greatly diminished.

Chemical sensitivity can cause any imaginable symptom, mental or physical. Each person can react differently to the same chemical. Only the stress theory can explain this. It's not a yes-or-no question; it's a matter of degree.

Thus, the best way to repair MCS is by addressing all of the factors involved: stress, hormones, infections, genetics, nutrients, toxins, and so forth.

4 Step Process for Relief from MCS

In spite of all the apparent complexities, there is a step-by-step way to address the problem.

- It starts with avoiding toxins and reactants.
- It ends with fixing the liver to allow it to detoxify the body properly. Cleansing is also important.
- Balance hormones because they are the messengers that keep all your systems running smoothly.
- Reducing the stress response is also critical.

There is an order to these because, for example, starting with a cleanse may release toxins into your body, which may create more problems if you can't detoxify them well. We need to avoid toxins, and be able to detoxify first.

1. Detox

[Most chemically sensitive people have an abundance of nutritional deficiencies. Click to Tweet.](#)

These deficiencies lead to a detoxification system that does not function properly. Together, this results in multiple chemical sensitivity.

The purpose of a DETOX is to provide nutrition for the liver to remove toxins. The supplements that every MCS person should have so the liver can detoxify and excrete toxins include:

- Alpha lipoic acid (ALA) – 300 mg per day
- N-acetyl cysteine (NAC) – 500 mg twice per day on an empty stomach
- Trace minerals (selenium, chromium, vanadium, manganese, and so forth) daily with food
- Activated B-complex (P5P, 5-MTHF, methylcobalamin) daily
- MSM – 500 mg three times per day
- Green tea extract – as directed
- Turmeric (curcumin) – as directed
- Milk thistle extract – use according to the label

The above can also be found together in detox formulas. Thorne Research makes a similar formula, [found here](#). This detox should be done for 2 weeks. If you are very sensitive, then you may need to half the dose for the first week.



After two weeks, *continue the detox regimen* and start a CLEANSE.

2. Cleanse

“Cleanse” literally means to clean out the body. This is done by not adding anything in – including food. Most cleanse programs have one thing in common – they are all a modified fast. So, whether you choose a juice cleanse, the Master Cleanse, a broth cleanse, water cleanse, or any other program, the bottom line is not to eat any food for a period of time.

The answer to the question of “how long?” depends upon the individual. The minimum time you need to change your metabolism and clean excess glycogen out of the liver is about 4 days. But, a week is better.

For those who are very sensitive to chemicals and have other problems such as diabetes or heart disease, you can go as long as 30 days! Cleansing out yeast, parasites, and bad bacteria is another benefit of this cleanse.

The next step to heal from MCS is to fix the intestines.

3. Bowel Repair

In order to absorb nutrients, especially those the liver needs to detox the body, it is essential that the bowels function well. This consists of four actions:

- 1 Remove all foods you are sensitive to. If you don't know of any food sensitivities, at least remove gluten, dairy, and sugar entirely from the diet.
- 2 Take digestive enzymes and Betaine HCL with every meal.
- 3 Repair with glutamine 500 mg three times per day.
- 4 Take probiotics on an empty stomach daily.

4. Balance Hormones

[Women with MCS often have hormone imbalances such as estrogen dominance. Click to Tweet.](#)

Whereas, men with MCS often lack testosterone. These hormone balances are important to the functioning of the body. Also, the adrenal and thyroid hormones often need to be balanced to help the liver detox properly. Both men and women should consider the following.

- Thyroid extract – about 30 mg per day from any vitamin store
- Iodine – 12.5mg per day for 90 days.
- Phosphatidylserine – 100 mg twice per day for 90 days
- Women: Vitex (Chaste tree berry extract) – as directed
- Men: Chrysin – 100 mg per day for 90 days

This program may need to be modified to individual differences. No two people are the same. The symptoms of MCS are diverse and unique to each person.

Multiple chemical sensitivity is a debilitating and invisible illness that results in a person's body being unable to process or detoxify normal everyday chemicals.

However, the program outlined here can help the majority of people with MCS to process and rid the body of toxins. These steps will stabilize the body to reduce MCS symptoms and improve your health.

We have helped many people get back their lives and be functional again. Robin is no longer moving from place-to-place, and Karen is doing well in her new job. MCS requires a great deal of patience, so both still have to be careful for large exposures to certain chemicals to allow healing to happen. But, you can see major improvement and function well in spite of the "normal" levels of environmental toxins around them.



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Pollutant-Free Eating for MCS

By Amanda Box, N.D

Environmental pollution... Oil spills...Climate change...Ozone depletion...

We live in a world that is slowly dying by the hands of man. Industrialization, poor waste management, and greed have left our earth more contaminated than ever before in the history of this planet.

But, I'm not here to speak on behalf of environmentalist and scientists. I am here to point out a reality that is overlooked amidst the mass concern of our carbon footprint. Yes, nature has responded to this age of industrialization, which leaves scientists and environmentalists concerned about the future of our planet. They cry out on behalf of the trees and the animals that walk the earth. But millions of people are left saying, "What about me?"

Today, chemicals, pollutants, and manufacturing wastes have left millions of people with illnesses that never existed before this modern age. We humans are made of the same basic elements as the plants and animals, so what pollutes them, pollutes us. Tragically, when a person is affected by pollution or chemicals, they are often written off as having some sort of psychological issue. Even the American Medical Association Council on Scientific Affairs believes that Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) should not be considered a recognized clinical syndrome.

Can you imagine being chronically sick and knowing that it is caused by chemical substances that you're exposed to, only to be called a quack? Maybe you can imagine that because you've experienced this yourself. If so, I'm so sorry that in the pursuit of all things modernized and efficient, industries have failed to recognize the damage they are doing to the human body.

Ironically, in a time where technology and medicine are saving more lives than ever before in human history, millions are simultaneously being poisoned. Chemical exposure is leaving millions ill and pushed aside with no answers. It is a tragedy that no one wants to hear about.

What is Multiple Chemical Sensitivity?

Most people who become chemically sensitive were once healthy individuals who tolerated chemical exposures with no noticeable side effects, just like everyone else. At some time in their lives, they were exposed to chemicals at a level from which they did not recover.

Some developed MCS after a renovation or newly built home, having carpets installed in their office, or exposure to pesticides. Other people became ill over a period of years, from cumulative exposures of everyday life that built up in their body's tissues.

On-the-job hazards are a common cause of these life-altering exposures. Some of the most common MCS inducing jobs include:

- Construction
- Metalworking
- Woodworking
- Automotive
- Textile
- Agriculture
- Information technology
- Waste management
- Cleaning

Living with multiple chemical sensitivity can be devastating. Those suffering with this life-altering illness often live isolated from society. Many are forced to wear gloves or respirator masks when they venture into public. People with MCS become sick by low level exposures to many common chemicals that typically don't bother the average person. Some of the most offending chemicals include:

- Perfume
- Pesticides
- Tobacco smoke
- Fresh paint
- New carpets
- Air freshener
- Vehicle exhaust
- Cleaning products

People with MCS can become extremely ill after exposures of only a few seconds to tiny amounts of these substances. Chemically sensitive people also frequently react to foods, drugs, molds, and electromagnetic fields.



Treating MCS

Treating multiple chemical sensitivity requires something more than just a medicine or pill. The two, most efficient ways to treat MCS are:

- Avoidance
- Nutrition

The most effective way to avoid offending chemicals is to adopt a natural lifestyle. This includes using natural alternatives for:



- Skin and body care
- Cleaning supplies
- Water (filtered is best)
- Yard and pest products
- Home construction (using tile or wood floors instead of carpet, etc.)

With the growing popularity of natural and “green” products, it is now easier than ever to replace your regular household items with safer alternatives. Even those who do not suffer with MCS can prevent future harm to themselves and their family by switching to all-natural alternatives. The internet is brimming with blogs and websites devoted to this way of life. Even this magazine, Home Cures That Work, is devoted to the lifestyle of maintaining health and wellness by adopting a chemical free, natural lifestyle!

However, nutrition is often overlooked in treating multiple chemical sensitivity. Many people who are chemically sensitive have numerous nutritional deficiencies. These deficiencies lead to a detoxification system that does not function properly. Our enzymatic, metabolic, and detoxification pathways are dependent on adequate vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. This makes nutrition of obvious importance and concern for those with MCS.

Studies have shown that those with chemical sensitivities tend to have deficiencies in magnesium, B6, and vitamin C. They also have lowered levels of antioxidants throughout the body, which in turn impairs neutralization of free radicals and toxins. In one study, patients with chemical sensitivities were treated with antioxidants like vitamin C, selenium, and zinc.^[1]

With these antioxidants, they exhibited both improvement and relief of symptoms!

What separates a typical person from someone with MCS is the ability to safely detoxify chemicals out of the body. This is why improved nutrition is key to the resolution of symptoms in those with chemical sensitivities! When someone with MCS is given the proper nutrients, they can detoxify, neutralize, and metabolize chemicals. This allows them to resume a normal life!

Chemical sensitivities can be caused by several factors, one of which could be fungal infections. The body will sometimes allow Candida in to use as a storage unit for chemicals or heavy metals or any number of harmful synthetics that could harm the body if not contained. Candida releases these toxins, which are not easily metabolized in those with MCS due to a lack of detoxification ability. This results in an overall feeling of fatigue and general state of feeling unwell. The good news is once the fungal infection is gone and the immune system is boosted; the body no longer over-reacts to the chemicals to which we are constantly exposed.

If a person has a high body burden of heavy metals, those heavy metals are thought to contribute to the development or aggravation of MCS. Heavy metals are part of the “total load” of toxins in the body, and may reduce the ability of the multiple chemical sensitivity patient to cope with other low dose toxins. These metals can accumulate in the tissues and cause neurological issues and severe mineral imbalances.

Here again, diet can help correct the inadequacies in those with chemical sensitivities. Proper nutrition can switch on the body’s ability to detoxify, allowing those with MCS to rid their body of

chemicals and therefore avoid adverse reactions. It can also help them overcome candida and cleanse excess metals out of the body.

When given the right foods, the body can restore normality and truly give someone with MCS and new lease on life!

Clean Eating for MCS

Clean eating is a new term in the natural health world used for a diet that is free of chemicals and artificial ingredients. Just as we want a clean environment that is free from pollutants, we should aim for a body that is free from pollution as well!

What you eat determines the cleanliness of your body. For example, eating processed foods with chemical additives and pesticide residues is going to pollute the environment inside your body. However, eating whole foods packed with nutrients gives each bodily system what it needs to metabolize, detoxify, and function at its highest capacity! This can reduce symptoms of MCS and help bring back normality into your life!

Eating for MCS is centered around two main principles:

- 1 Consume foods free of pesticides, preservatives, and other artificial ingredients.
- 2 Focus on foods high in antioxidants, magnesium, B6 and vitamin C.

Avoiding pesticide residues in foods is no easy task. Today's produce is heavily sprayed and mass produced in order to keep up with demand. Pesticides keep the pests away, therefore increasing yield. However, spraying the food we consume comes with consequences. Pesticides are designed to kill and their effects on the human body should not be ignored.^[2]

Side effects from pesticide exposure can not only induce or aggravate MCS, but can also cause:

- Skin irritations
- Respiratory problems
- Organ failure
- Damage to nervous and immune systems
- Birth defects
- DNA damage
- Disruption of the hormonal system
- Cancer

Unfortunately, scrubbing, soaking, and peeling the skin off of produce does not eliminate pesticide residue. Using these techniques may reduce pesticides, but sensitive individuals, such as those with MCS, shouldn't rely solely on these methods. This is because pesticides are sprayed throughout the growing process and absorbed throughout the entire plant, not just the outer surface.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are highest in most of the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants needed by those with MCS. But, avoiding them altogether would be counterproductive. Thankfully, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) tests fruits and vegetables each year and rates them from the highest in pesticides to the lowest. For example, in 2014 the average grape they tested contained 15 different pesticides! On the other hand, only 1% of the avocados tested contained any detectable pesticides.

Each year, after testing the foods, the EWG puts together the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen lists. The Dirty Dozen ranks the top 12 fruits and vegetables with the highest levels of pesticide residues. The Clean Fifteen however contains the 15 lowest levels of pesticides residues.

Shopping from the Clean Fifteen list and avoiding the Dirty Dozen is one of the best ways to reduce pesticide residues in your diet. However, buying organic is truly the only way to bypass pesticides. The organic seal assures you that the farmer did not use chemical pesticides when raising his crops. Personally, I use my Dirty Dozen list as my “buy organic” list.

Avoiding artificial ingredients is also extremely crucial for MCS. These chemical additives are known for causing serious allergic reactions. Lab-created, chemical-based preservatives and artificial colors, flavors, and sweeteners can not only cause allergic reactions, but trigger disease! Always read labels before consuming anything you eat and if you spot a name that doesn't sound like food, it likely isn't.

Some common artificial ingredients and their side-effects^[3] include:

- Sodium benzoate: ADHD, DNA damage, cancer
- Monosodium glutamate: heart palpitations, migraines, chest pain
- Sodium nitrite: Irritability, headaches, cancer^[4]
- Sulfites: fever, rashes, asthma attacks
- Potassium sorbate: migraines, swollen eyes, mouth, and throat
- Aspartame: altered serotonin levels, epilepsy, Parkinson's, cancer

Lastly, it is important to incorporate foods that contain the micronutrients that are often lacking in those with MCS: magnesium, B6, and vitamin C. These nutrients are important in metabolism and detoxification processes throughout the body.

Foods rich in magnesium include:

- Raw organic spinach
- Brown rice
- Pumpkin seeds
- Avocado

Foods rich in B6 include:

- Sunflower seeds
- Chicken (organic)
- Pistachio's
- Banana's

Food's rich in vitamin C include:

- Organic kale
- Organic strawberries
- Broccoli
- Oranges



I also want to note that eliminating gluten, sugar, and dairy can also benefit those who suffer with MCS. These foods tend to aggravate the digestive tract and lower immunity, exacerbating allergenic reactions. Taking a probiotic supplement and drinking probiotic rich drinks like kombucha and

kefir water may also help. They will strengthen the digestive system and build the immune system, which can ease allergenic symptoms in those with MCS.

It is important to remember throughout your journey of clean eating, to keep a food diary. Even foods that are free of chemical additives can sometimes cause reactions in those who are chemically sensitive. Note any sort of reaction whether it is gas, headache, or heartburn. Try eliminating the offending food and note any improvement in your symptoms. This may take a bit of trial and error, but every individual is different and unfortunately there is no “one size fits all” diet for MCS.

Below are two recipes that will help in your quest towards pollutant-free eating. The first is a clean crockpot chicken recipe. I love crockpot recipes because they are not only easy to prepare, but always produce such a tender and delicious chicken! So many crockpot recipes contain powder mixes or canned soups, which contain chemical additives. This recipe contains all-natural ingredients and is absolutely delicious served over brown rice for a warm, comforting dinner.

Crock Pot Curry Chicken

Ingredients:

- 3 pounds of organic or free-range chicken (breasts, thighs, chicken on the bone, etc.)
- 1 large onion chopped
- 2 carrots chopped small
- 2 clove garlic minced
- 1 tbsp curry powder
- 1 tbsp organic mustard (condiment, not the spice)
- 1/2 cup coconut cream (liquid) or milk
- 1/2 cup organic chicken stock or water
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil
- Salt to taste

Directions:

1. Place the carrots, onion and garlic at the bottom of the crock pot.
2. Next place the raw chicken pieces on top of the vegetables, layering the chicken.
3. Add the spices over the chicken.
4. In a small pot melt the coconut oil and mix in the chicken stock or water and coconut cream until combined. Pour this over the chicken.
5. Cook on low for 6 hours (it can go longer if you are not home yet).
6. When done, remove the pieces of chicken and puree the liquid for gravy with an immersion blender. Serve over rice or quinoa. Enjoy!^[5]

Everyone needs a little sweet in their life! This all-natural healthy peanut butter fudge contains no added sugar and is packed full of protein, making it not only a healthy dessert, but a great snack as well! Peanut butter is high in both magnesium and B6 and bananas also contain magnesium and other important nutrients like potassium and manganese!

Healthy Peanut Butter Fudge

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup organic peanut butter (use almond butter if peanut sensitive)
- 1 large banana (can sub with 2/3 cup coconut butter)
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract

- 1/16 tsp salt (
- 2 tbspc coconut butter OR melted extra virgin coconut oil
- One packet or 15 drops of stevia

Directions:

1. Stir peanut butter until there is no longer oil on the top.
2. You can either combine all ingredients in a small blender until completely smooth, OR mash the banana and stir together ingredients very patiently by hand until completely smooth.
3. Scoop into a small plastic container, parchment-lined glass container, candy molds, mini cupcake liners.
4. Freeze until firm. Due to the melting nature of coconut, this fudge is best stored in the freezer.^[6]

MCS symptoms can be drastically reduced and eliminated with a diet that is full of nutrient-dense and chemical-free foods! Don't let the environment inside your body become polluted any longer! Clean up the environment inside your body by revolutionizing the way you eat. Your body is an ecosystem of it's own. When you eliminate the toxic pollution, you will see your life flourish once again!



Amanda Box is a Traditional Naturopath and a graduate of Clayton College of Natural Health. She's been in the health and wellness industry for over 12 years and currently practices naturopathic consulting in the Kansas City, Missouri area. Her passion is helping others achieve wellness of the whole person – mind, body, and spirit. If you don't have a good local naturopathic practitioner to turn to for your personal needs, Amanda does phone consultations! She can help you with weight loss, detox/cleansing, acute and chronic illnesses, skin and body care, grocery shopping, pantry overhauls, and more! Visit her blog "My Life in a Healthnut Shell" at: <http://amandabox.blogspot.com/>

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By Amanda Box, N.D.

Lindsay peeked out of her room and said, “Remember, don’t wear any perfume or put any hairspray in your hair. Anna is chemically sensitive!”

Fifteen years ago I was going to a party with my best friend, Lindsay. The party was at a house specially built-in the countryside for her friend Anna. Anna had what is called multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS). Just living within city limits triggered symptoms of chronic pain and nausea.

In multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS), a person develops markedly negative reactions to everyday chemical exposures. These include exposures to:

- Pesticides in buildings, in gardens, on our food, and on pets
- Chemical cleaners
- Petrochemical heating systems
- Paints
- Perfumes
- Industrial emissions
- A myriad of others chemicals

I’ll never forget wondering what it would be like to never be able to spray on my favorite perfume every day. Little did I know, years later I would understand how toxic perfume could be.

About 7 years ago, I noticed headaches while cuddling up to my husband when he was wearing cologne. I got more headaches when I walked through the perfume section of a department store. Soon, the perfume that I had worn for years was giving me a headache. I even noticed a headache after my mom washed one of my shirts in her scented detergent. All the triggers were pointing toward a chemical sensitivity to synthetic perfumes.

But I’ve often thought of Anna now that I have experienced my own chemical sensitivity. Anna is not an anomaly in her suffering. She is one of nearly 74 million people who suffer from some sort of chemical sensitivity.^[1]

It’s likely that you, or someone you know belongs to the millions that experience illness with chemicals. Do you know what is even more alarming? The chronic illness you may be dealing with can be a direct result from these chemical sensitivities. The good news is with simple lifestyle modifications, your illness can disappear. Eliminate the root cause and you can reverse the progress of chemical sensitivity.

Chemical Sensitivity Defined

Multiple chemical sensitivity occurs when there is an adverse reaction to chemicals in the air, food and water. Generally, these chemicals are harmless to the bulk of the population. But when a person becomes increasingly sensitive to a wide variety of chemical substances, a chronic medical condition or state of illness can result. MCS goes by other names as well.^[2] Some of these include:

- Toxic Injury (TI)
- Toxic Induced Loss of Tolerance (TILT)
- Chemical Injury Syndrome (CS)
- Environmental Illness (EI)
- Idiopathic Environmental Intolerance (IEI)
- Gulf War Syndrome

It is rare that someone is born with MCS. This intolerance to multiple chemicals is typically triggered by a trauma, or large exposure to a toxic chemical. Many times this occurs during a home or office renovation without proper ventilation. Other times, on-the-job hazards expose people to these life-changing chemicals.

Though the cause cannot always be clearly defined, researchers have found that it is twice as common in women than in men and typically occurs after the age of 30.^[3]

MCS is an illness that is caused by heavy industrialism. Our industries continue to dump wastes into the air, water and food. As a result, a certain number of people get sick from exposure to these chemicals. In a recent study in the U.S., 11.2% of the respondents reported sensitivities to common chemicals... and this number continues to grow!^[4]

The most common sensitivities in those with MCS include:

- [Cigarette smoke](#)
- Perfumes and fragrances
- Pesticides
- Air fresheners
- Scented soaps
- New carpet or flooring
- Fresh paint
- Chlorine
- Clothing washed in scented detergent or fabric softener
- Newsprint
- Computers, printers, and copiers
- Common household cleaners
- And much more (nail polish, moth balls, vinyl plastic, hair spray, etc.)



As you can see, this list is common in nearly every home and workplace! This causes those who suffer from MCS to feel as though they cannot escape their illness. Many choose isolation and, sadly, become hermits inside their safe home environment.

It is important for every person with MCS to try to create as safe and chemical free-living space as possible. Housing may be the single most crucial element in survival and possible improvement for someone with MCS. This cleanup requires learning about everyday toxins and safer alternatives to

perfume, cigarette smoke, air fresheners, pesticides and cleaning products to create a pure and chemical-free living space.

Ironically, environmentalists fight for a less toxic atmosphere. Yet, inside our very homes are where we are exposed to the most pollution. Sadly, most people are oblivious to the chemicals that are chipping away at their health and eating away inside their property line.

City dwellers are subject to industrial emissions, vehicle exhausts, toxins used by neighbors such as lawn chemicals, and a myriad of other poisons. Rural dwellers are exposed to farm chemicals that include pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers, which are extremely toxic.

You may not see the adverse effects of these toxicants until the often paralyzing symptoms of MCS or a chronic illness results.

Chronic Disease and MCS

The underlying characteristic of MCS is an abnormal or increased capacity to detect chemicals in the environment, primarily through smell and taste.

Because of the trauma from chemical exposure, the central nervous system and immune system are damaged. Simply from overexposure, the nervous system and immune system go into overdrive in someone with MCS. As a result, the brain remains on hyper alert and begins to react to the slightest exposure.

The over-sensitive brain leaves the person susceptible to the smallest whiff, touch or taste of a chemical substance. People can suffer delayed neurological damage that may include disturbances in sensory experience, motor function, speech, sleep, and emotional stability. Often, the symptoms continue to worsen over time leaving people with MCS miserable and without hope.

Typical symptoms of MCS include:

- Muscle and joint pain
- Tiredness, lethargy and fatigue
- Sore throat
- Memory and cognition impairment
- Headaches and migraines
- Visual disturbances
- Skin irritation (rashes, hives, etc)
- Anxiety or irritability
- Depression
- [Asthma](#)
- Gastrointestinal issues (diarrhea, vomiting, nausea)
- Tachycardia
- Seizures

Functional Somatic Syndrome

MCS falls into a category of illnesses labeled functional somatic syndrome. Other illnesses in this category include fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome. These illnesses often overlap each

other and exhibit similar symptoms. It is fairly common that people who have MCS also have either fibromyalgia or chronic fatigue. IBS is another illness that often accompanies MCS.

Many people diagnosed with chronic fatigue or fibromyalgia note a decrease in their symptoms when reducing exposure to chemicals. If you or someone you know suffers from one of these illnesses, then follow these steps to decrease MCS. The tips provided here to lowering your exposure to chemicals can improve the pain and fatigue associated with chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia and IBS.

Lyme Disease

Some have speculated that undiagnosed Lyme disease can be a cause of MCS. It is estimated that over 18 million people in the U.S. have Lyme disease. In most cases, it is not diagnosed. It is a misconception that Lyme is only spread by ticks and identified by a bullseye rash. More than half of those with Lyme never had a bullseye rash. Also, the spirochete (bacteria) behind Lyme disease can spread via fleas, mosquitoes, mites, food and sexual contact.

Lyme can hide in our tissues giving a false negative on the Western blot test.^[5] However, science is discovering new and more accurate tests for Lyme disease. If you suffer from MCS, I recommend one of these newer and more accurate testing methods. The iSpot Test is a good example and is more accurate identifying whether or not Lyme is truly the culprit of your MCS.^[6]

PTSD

Gulf War Syndrome and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have a connection to MCS, as well. In 1990, 700,000 went to war and 250,000 came home with chronic illness. Even the CDC established a connection between sick Gulf War veterans and chemical sensitivities.^[7]

These veterans were exposed to a plethora of toxic chemicals in pesticides, vaccines, anti-nerve gas pills and much more. Unfortunately, these symptoms did not end with the Gulf War. Servicemen continue to be exposed to toxic chemicals while on deployment.

Research has suggested a common etiology between post traumatic stress disorder and multiple chemical sensitivity, as well.^[8] PTSD is a debilitating condition that follows a traumatic event. While not everyone with MCS has PTSD, some most certainly do. The ability to cope with trauma therapy and achieve positive outcomes is low, until the mind-body and environmental stress load is reduced. These two illnesses overlap often enough that researchers are suggesting further study into common causes.

Detoxifying your Home Life

It is imperative that if you have any symptoms of MCS, that you immediately incorporate methods of chemical reduction into your life and home.

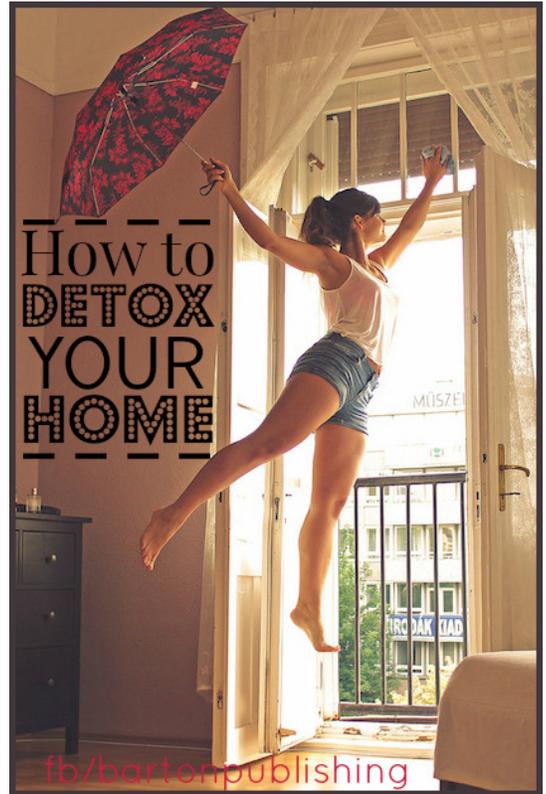
Even if you don't suffer from MCS, lowering your toxic exposure in your environment can still dramatically improve your health. Chemical sensitivities often mimic or induce other illnesses. You could currently be suffering from migraines, dizzy spells or joint pain and have no idea that chemical sensitivity is to blame.

Reducing toxic exposure is beneficial for everyone, from infants to the elderly. Even sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is thought to be the result of accidental poisoning due to toxic gases released from baby mattresses.^[9]

It is never too early, nor too late to start reducing the chemicals in your home! After all, home is where your health is!

When I first started experiencing headaches from synthetic fragrances, I took dramatic steps in lowering chemical exposure in my home for my own safe and the safety of my family. I began to eliminate excess chemicals in my body care, detergents, and household cleaners long before I ever manifested severe multiple chemical sensitivity symptoms. I've found in lowering my exposure to chemicals that I've never needed to sacrifice cleaning power, pleasant scents, or even taste!

If you look closely, you will be surprised how toxic your home truly is. MCS inducing chemicals hide out in everything from your household cleaners to the mattress you sleep on! Below are the 5 most important things in your home that need to be replaced in order to detoxify your life and bring about a new sense of health and well-being!



1. Cleaning Supplies

Cleaning supplies are packed full of toxic ingredients that are released into the air with each squirt or spray. Many may kill germs, but the chemicals used to kill the germs can slowly be killing you!

I only use chemical- and fragrance-free household cleaners in my home.

- I use apple cider vinegar with water to clean my floors.
- To clean my countertops, mirrors, and windows, I use Norwex brand microfiber cloths.
- I currently use Biokleen brand for my [dish soap](#) and [dishwashing detergent](#).
- I also suggest adding essential oil of lemon to your cleaning solutions for anti-microbial properties and a pleasant chemical-free scent!

Chemical-free cleaners, available at a health food market or online, work just as well as their chemical based counterparts... just without the negative consequences!

2. Body Care

What you put onto your skin, ends up inside your body! This makes chemical-free body care very important, not only to prevent skin reactions, but systemic issues inside the body!

You can purchase natural shampoo, body wash, and face cleansers at your local health food store or online. Some recommended brands include Aubrey Organics, Dr. Bronners, and Devita.

My family and I use completely chemical-free body-care products. We also use a homemade body butter for moisturizing and homemade deodorant as well. See our recipes below.

Thankfully, I have never suffered to the degree that Anna or the thousands of others with MCS. Luckily, my symptoms were mild and my lifestyle was easily modified to reverse the negative reaction to perfume. I currently use a blend of essential oils in place of perfume, although there are several all-natural perfumes also available. [Vered organic botanicals](#) makes some wonderful perfumes that are made from essential oils with no chemicals or preservatives.

I currently purchase all-natural makeup from both www.spiritbeautylounge.com and www.gressaskin.com. My skin is far less sensitive, more soft and supple, and I am now headache-free from the lack of synthetic fragrances!

3. Food

Food intolerance is common with those suffering from MCS. Addressing food sensitivities can be the single most effective action to take to reduce the profoundly debilitating effects of MCS. This requires eating chemical-free foods and those in the most natural state possible. This means the food is:

- Minimally processed
- Grown without pesticides
- Free of added hormones and antibiotics
- Contains no artificial flavors, colors, sweeteners, or other artificial ingredients
- [GMO-free](#)

Once you understand and suspect that chemicals and foods you're exposed to everyday may be decreasing your quality of life, it's time to do something about it.

- Avoid buying foods on the [Dirty Dozen list](#), which contains the foods highest in pesticide residues.
- Instead, purchase foods from the [Clean 15 list](#), which contain the foods lowest in pesticide residues.
- Avoid pesticides altogether and eat organic foods
- Buy organic meat and dairy products that are free from growth hormones and other chemical residues.
- Avoid GMO foods. The top GMO offenders are corn, soy and canola. Look for non-gmo versions of foods that contain these ingredients. GMOs hide out in many foods, even ketchup!

It is no surprise that foods are recommended for their health benefits. Read the labels on everything you purchase. If you don't recognize an ingredient as a food item, then it is a chemical and avoid it at all costs!

A judicious choice of food will counteract toxic agents. Therefore, your diet can be a major factor in determining whether you show toxic symptoms following exposure.

4. Mattress

Around 4 years ago, we decided to invest in a natural mattress. After researching, we discovered many disadvantages of a regular mattress. A typical bed mattress contains:

- Chemical flame retardants
- Toxic chemical foams
- Formaldehyde
- Many other chemical additives
- Plus, the metal springs can act as an antenna and emit radiation while you sleep!^[10]

Stay away from synthetic memory foam mattresses, as well. They release volatile organic compounds that give off aromatic properties as they naturally degrade. Many have complained of severe allergic symptoms from the offgassing of the chemicals used to make these mattresses. Consider the effects of sleeping every night, eight hours at a time, breathing in the gasses given off by a synthetic memory foam mattress.

There are many non-toxic and even organic mattresses available today. We chose a natural latex mattress from www.sleepez.com and have never been happier! We sleep more soundly than before. Plus my husband no longer complains of back pain! You spend nearly a third of your life sleeping, so a comfortable non-toxic mattress is a worthy investment!

5. Filters

Purchasing air and water filters for your home are two other great ways to filter out pollution and chemicals from your environment.

I recommend purchasing an air filter fit for your needs. If you have extreme sensitivities, invest in a pricier more efficient filter. Full home filters can even be installed with your heating and cooling system. If you have mild to no symptoms, you can purchase a portable HEPA filter which helps to filter molds and pollen out of the air and also neutralize odors.

Another great investment to purify the air is a salt lamp. These lamps act like a natural ionizer by releasing negative ions into the air. These negative ions help cancel out the electromagnetic radiation being emitted by your electronic devices and help to maintain a normal ionic balance in the air. Many people note an overall sense of well-being as well as better sleep quality when they [use these salt lamps](#).

[You know that we are all exposed to toxins in the water we drink](#). Chlorine used in water treatment reacts with organic (natural) material in the water to form new chemicals like chloroform and other toxic substances. These may aggravate chemical sensitivity when breathed in from shower vapors or ingested via drinking and cooking. Since a lot of exposure occurs during showering and bathing, you should consider installing showerhead and faucet filters or a whole-house water filtration system, which would also treat water used in clothes-washing and dishwashing machines (these uses also release chemicals into your home).

However, for those who want even more filtration, especially fluoride which is very difficult to remove, I recommend investing in a Berkey filter. These filtration systems are not cheap, but they remove nearly every possible chemical, metal, or microorganism that could be present in your drinking water! They are truly [the Gold-Standard in water filtration!](#)

Detoxifying Your Body

In these times with so much cancer, chronic and degenerative illness epidemics, it's to everyone's benefit to understand detoxing. Your body needs to detoxify substances from outside the body and those made inside the body. People have hundreds of chemicals stored in the body. Ridding your body of these accumulated toxins is very important in keeping your body healthy and free from disease. How well, or how poorly, your body is able to detoxify will in a large part determine how well or sick you feel.

Those with MCS who get better do so through avoidance and careful, controlled detox of existing toxins in the body. There are some great ways to naturally detox the body, like investing in:

- [Renew Life's Cleansemore](#)
- Juice fasting
- Colonics
- An infrared sauna

Chemically sensitive patients often have impaired ability of the liver to detoxify toxic substances. The liver is the primary detoxification organ in the body. This makes it of utmost importance to maintain a healthy, well-functioning liver. Cleansing programs and supplements designed for the liver are important in overcoming MCS. I recommend a supplement that contains milk thistle, dandelion, and artichoke taken daily. This will increase the liver's ability to detoxify and move chemicals out of the body!

The average person should detox their body at least twice a year using one or more of these methods. Those with multiple chemical sensitivities may have to use detoxification techniques on a monthly basis to clear their body of accumulated toxins.

It is clear that chemical sensitivity can destroy a productive life and do so quickly. Don't wait until chemicals have taken their toll on your life to make the change to a chemical-free lifestyle. The transition may take some adjustment, but I can assure you once you've rid your life of toxic chemicals you won't go back! You will feel the difference:

- Your mood will improve!
- Your energy will increase!
- And you may even lose those extra pounds that have been hanging around!

For some of you, toxic chemicals have turned your world upside down. You suffer from chemical sensitivities that isolate you from the rest of the world. Don't lose hope! Take steps to not only avoid the chemicals around you, but to detoxify. You can take your life back.

Remember Anna? She now lives within the city limits with her husband and two children. Though she avoids chemicals and uses natural products, she no longer requires adhering to strict conditions to avoid feeling sick. She now goes to church, to the mall, and among friends without worry or concern. Freedom can be your future as well! You just have to take the steps to get there!

I have included the recipe and directions for the disinfecting cleaner, body butter, and deodorant I personally make and use in my home. They are easy to make and work as well as their chemical-laden counterparts! Enjoy!

Disinfecting Chemical Free Cleaner

Ingredients:

- 3 parts filtered water
- 1 part apple cider vinegar
- 10 drops of lemon essential oil or thieves essential oil



Directions:

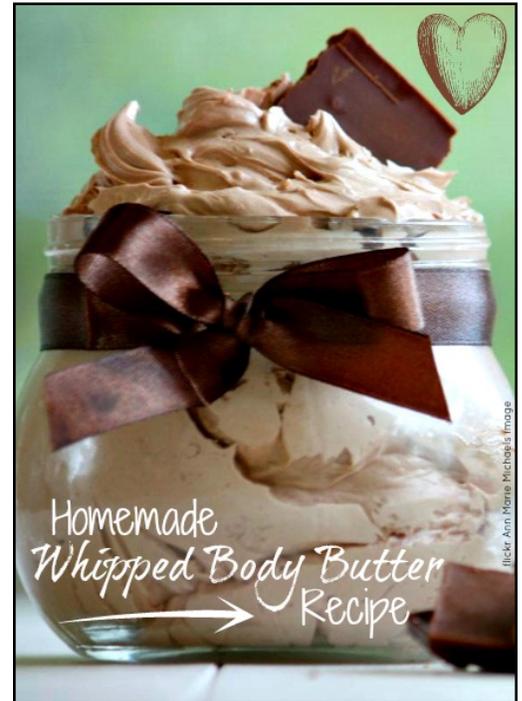
Add to spray bottle and shake before each use.

Homemade Whipped Body Butter**Ingredients:**

- 1/2 cup shea butter
- 1/2 cup cocoa butter
- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1/2 cup light oil like almond, olive or jojoba
- Lavender, orange, or lemon essential oils are optional

Directions:

- 1 In a pan, combine all ingredients except essential oils.
- 2 Bring to low heat and stir constantly until all ingredients are melted.
- 3 Remove from heat immediately and let cool slightly.
- 4 Move to fridge and let cool another 1 hour or until the oils start to harden but still somewhat soft.
- 5 Use a hand mixer to whip for 10 minutes until fluffy.
- 6 Return to fridge for 10-15 minutes to set.



Store in a glass jar with a lid and use as you would regular lotion or body butter. If your home stays above 75 degrees, it may soften and need to be kept at the fridge, but it will stay whipped at a temperature lower than that.^[11]

Homemade Natural Deodorant**Ingredients:**

- 1/4 cup baking soda
- 1/4 cup arrowroot powder
- 2 T. cocoa butter
- 1 T. coconut oil
- 1 T. sweet almond or olive oil
- 5 drops [grapefruit essential oil](#) (or for a more masculine scent use [cedarwood or sandalwood essential oil](#))
- 3 drops tea tree oil

Directions:

- 1 Gently melt the cocoa butter, coconut oil and sweet almond oil on low heat. As soon as fat elements are melted, remove pan from heat.
- 2 Add essential oils to melted fats and set aside.
- 3 Add dry ingredients to a separate bowl and use a whisk to combine.
- 4 Add liquid oils to dry ingredients and use whisk to completely combined.
- 5 Immediately pour deodorant into jars while it is a thick, liquefied paste.
- 6 Place your filled jars in the refrigerator to set.
- 7 The result (kept at room temperature) should be a moisture-rich paste.

*If you have very sensitive skin, try substituting arrowroot for the baking soda or for a portion of the baking soda. Please note that this may lower the effectiveness of the deodorant.^[12]



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^[11] Adapted from wellnessmama.com

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Beating Multiple Chemical Sensitivities with Fitness

By Rob Fischer

We all experience the noxious effects of chemicals in our environment, to some extent or another. We are regularly exposed to about 75,000 new chemicals that have been created in the last 50 years. And less than 10 percent of those have been tested for their toxicity.^[1]

You might occasionally react to some toxic substance that you've been exposed to. Or, you may suffer chronically from multiple chemical sensitivities (MCS) from being bombarded with chemicals. Symptoms of MCS or reactions to exposure of a toxic substance may include:^[2]

Headaches	Fatigue	Dizziness
Nausea	Congestion	Itching
Sneezing	Sore throat	Chest pain
Heart rhythm changes	Breathing difficulties	Muscle pain
Skin rash	Diarrhea	Bloating
Gas	Confusion	Difficulty concentrating
Memory problems	Mood changes	Weepy eyes

How Exercise Helps

We may experience a reaction to the chemicals around us, or we may not. But we all carry a chemical load due to our exposure to heavy metals, pesticides, volatile organic compounds, and other chemicals that permeate our environment.^[3] We absorb these substances through our food, water, breathing, and skin.

Regular exercise – especially aerobic -- helps relieve MCS symptoms and prevent future occurrences. Below are just a few of the ways that physical activity helps to cleanse, bring balance and relieve stress. Exercise:

1. Detoxes the body.

Exercise induces sweating which helps remove toxic substances from the body.^[4]

[Many industrial toxins and pesticides leave the body only through the sweat glands. Click to Tweet.](#)

As we exercise our body heats up, mobilizing the chemicals held in our fat. These toxins are then released and excreted through the pores.^[5]

2. Oxygenates the blood.

Our respiratory system and every metabolic function in our bodies require oxygen. Exercise increases oxygen take-up.

[Lack of exercise can result in oxygen-depleted blood, which is typical of patients with cancer and other chronic illnesses. Click to Tweet.](#)

Many toxic waste materials in the body can only be neutralized through oxidation, which requires adequate oxygen in the blood.^[6]

3. Removes waste through the lymphatic system.

The lymphatic system bathes the cells and carries away the “garbage.” There is no pump in the body to flush the lymphatic system.^[7] Instead this requires movement and breathing deeply from the diaphragm for this to occur.^[8] Exercise accomplishes this masterfully.

4. Relieves stress.

Many of the symptoms of stress mirror those of MCS and stress exacerbates the effects of MCS.^[9] When under stress, our bodies secrete stress chemicals like cortisol and adrenalin. Unless we eliminate these stress chemicals, they cause serious problems in our bodies. Physical exercise is one of the best ways to get rid of these toxic stress chemicals.

5. Speeds up the metabolism.

As the metabolism speeds up, toxins are expelled from the body more rapidly and efficiently. Also, exercise moves food through the digestive tract more quickly, thus eliminating problems like constipation and other intestinal issues, which hinder the lymphatic system’s ability to function properly.^[10]

Physical exercise offers so many healthful benefits! In addition to the above, it improves the body’s energy production, releases feel-good endorphins, lowers blood sugar and blood pressure, lowers LDL cholesterol, while boosting HDLs, and [supports the immune system](#). Just rattling off all these benefits makes me want to go out and exercise, so I think I will!

Tips for Exercising with MCS

Here are 9 tips for exercising with a view to relieving, minimizing and preventing MCS:

1. Choose an aerobic exercise you enjoy.

There are so many to choose from including: walking briskly, running, jogging, hiking, cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing, bicycling, Jazzercise or some other aerobic dance, rowing, swimming, etc.

2. Exercise outside in a non-toxic setting.

Even if your home has filters, a non-toxic park or other outdoor setting is probably freer from toxins. Exercising outdoors seems to speed the recovery of many MCS patients.^[11] Avoid exercising near traffic or in a heavy industrial area. Watch air quality reports and avoid exercising outdoors when the air quality is particularly poor.

3. Stay hydrated.

Drink plenty of filtered water from a [BPA-free water bottle](#). Hydration is an important part of the cycle for metabolic processes and sweating.

4. Exercise in clothes and equipment free of offending chemicals.

Also, wash your clothes with a [non-toxic laundry soap](#).

5. Eat organic foods.

Organic foods should contain fewer harmful toxins like pesticides and fertilizers. They also tend to be richer in nutrients and minerals to power you through your exercise routines.

6. Practice proper breathing.

Many people are unaccustomed to breathing deeply from their diaphragm. Exercising can help with this skill. Consciously develop a deep, breathing rhythm as you engage in your physical activity.^[12]

7. Exercise to a sweat and shower right after.

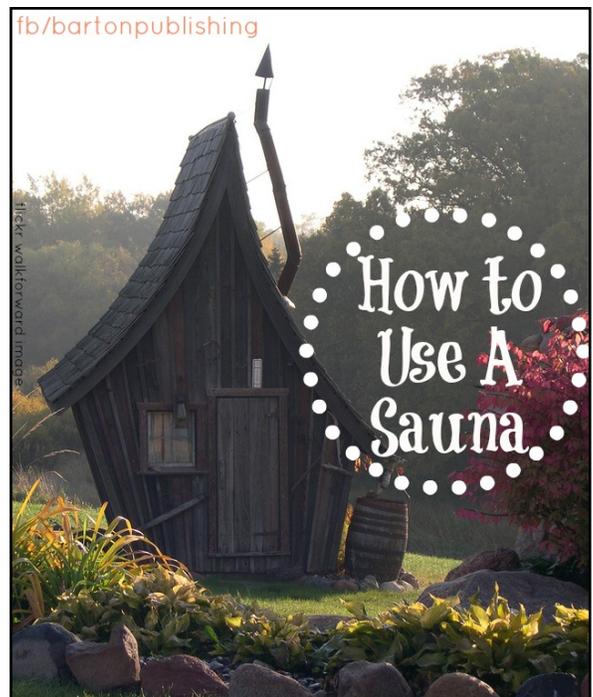
Sweating helps detox the body, but it's important to shower afterward to remove the toxins from your skin. Otherwise they may be reabsorbed. Also, shower rather than bathe in order to fully wash contaminants off your body.^[13]

8. Replenish your electrolytes.

In addition to expelling toxins, sweating also expends important minerals like magnesium, sodium and potassium. Replenish these with fruit or [make your own electrolyte drink](#).

9. Follow up your exercise in the sauna.

An infrared sauna is best and supplements exercise with additional ability to extract toxins from the body through the pores.^[14]



Drink 12 oz. of water and then enter the sauna immediately after completing your exercise. Begin with about 10-15 minutes. If you experience any discomfort or dizziness, leave promptly. If you do fine for 2 weeks at 15 minutes, increase to 20 minutes if you wish. If you have no ill effects at all in the sauna, you can gradually increase to a maximum of 45 minutes (increasing the time by not more than 5 minutes each week). Put a small towel on the bench where you sit so your sweat does not contaminate the sauna. Try to sauna once per day at least 5 to 6 days per week. Upon leaving the sauna, drink another 12 oz. of water to avoid a headache. Then, shower after the sauna. Beware of public saunas that may be cleaned with toxic chemicals.

Regular aerobic exercise is one of the key factors for recovery, minimizing and preventing MCS and maintaining overall health. Exercise provides a combination of heat and sweating, oxygen, increasing metabolic rate and reduced gut transit time to encourage detox and heal from MCS. Find an exercise you enjoy and begin this week to enjoy its many benefits!



Rob Fischer has been writing professionally for over 35 years. His experience includes writing curricula, study guides, articles, blogs, newsletters, manuals, workbooks, training courses, workshops, and books. Rob has written for numerous churches, for Burlington Northern Railroad, Kaiser Aluminum, and Barton Publishing. He has also trained managers in effective business writing. Rob holds two Master's degrees, both focused heavily on writing. Rob has published eleven books and serves as an editor and ghostwriter for other authors.

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Complete Relief from MCS Disease

By Rob Fischer

We often hear some version of the following claim, “If you don’t have your health, you don’t have anything,” or its positive expression, “If you have your health, you’ve got everything.” There is no question that our physical health is vitally important to our overall well-being!

For many, chemical sensitivities pose a real threat to their health—and probably for all of us, even more than we know.

But I’d like to challenge the above claim, not to discredit it or diminish its importance, but to contrast it with a disease and sickness that threatens even more than health itself. In all reality, other physical diseases pale in comparison to the devastating effects of this disease.

The disease I’m referring to results each year in thousands of murders, tens of thousands of rapes, and hundreds of thousands of robberies in the US. But this sickness is not just confined to “criminals.” This disease manifests itself in child and spousal abuse, road rage, bigotry, outbursts of anger, and malicious lawsuits.

This illness destroys families, wrecks marriages, ruins relationships, alienates friends, and divides a nation. Its more subtle symptoms surface as arrogance, greed, cheating, lying, unforgiveness, ungratefulness, vulgarity, profanity, and lack of love, mercy, or self-control.

Not only is this disease horrible in its symptoms, manifestations, and outcomes, but it is terrible in its dominance. There is no portion of the population that has been spared from infection. Contamination is universal.

In fact, as humans, we’re genetically predisposed to this disease. There’s no avoiding it. We may each exhibit its symptoms in varying degrees, but we’re all capable and culpable. We are all infected. We all stand guilty.^[1]

In contrast to harmful chemicals, viruses and bacteria that threaten our health from outside of us, Jesus Christ explained, “It’s not what goes into your body that defiles you; you are defiled by what comes from your heart.”^[2] Obviously, I’m talking about the pervasive spiritual disease of sin.

But as is often the case with a diagnosis, one of the initial responses is denial. In the case of this spiritual disease, we express denial in many ways: “I’m not as bad as so-and-so.” Or, “Sin’s not a *real* disease.” Or, “I’m not a bad person.” Or, “Who says I have this disease?”

Sadly, it’s possible for a person to have their health, but not have much else. After all, what is physical health if we have no one to enjoy it with? What is freedom from illness, cancer, or MCS if our lives are still plagued by the awful effects of sin? Jesus asked, “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”^[3]

In an article on multiple chemical sensitivities, the author asserts that “Most serious health problems come from difficult relationships between people.”^[4] Perhaps we’ve all experienced the gut-wrenching torment of a broken relationship and the havoc it wreaks on us physically, emotionally and spiritually. [This is sin-induced stress.](#)

I’m not saying that all stress stems from sin, but often it does. Feelings of guilt, remorse, regret, anxiety, fear, anger, envy, jealousy, etc. are often prompted by sin in our lives or by that imposed on us by others. These emotions create stress in our lives and we know that stress aggravates MCS.^[5] From this perspective, addressing sin in our lives may help relieve or prevent an MCS reaction.

In fact, until we resolve the issue of sin in our lives, we find ourselves in opposition to God. Our sin creates a rift in our relationship with him, so that we’re estranged from him. Depending on our spiritual sensitivities, we may or may not even be aware of this broken relationship—but it exists.^[6] Fortunately, God loves us too much to leave us guilt-ridden and helplessly “sick” in our sin. The passage below refers to Christ and what he has done for us to remedy our plight.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.^[7]

This is why God sent his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus died for our sins. He suffered to pay the penalty for our sins so that we might be reconciled to God.^[8] Obviously, if it took the death of God’s Son to break the power of sin, then there’s nothing you or I can do to earn or merit this priceless gift. Instead, Christ offers us forgiveness from our sins and restored relationship with his Father if we put our trust in him.^[9]

Trusting Christ for the forgiveness of sin may not heal your MCS, but it definitely can heal the much more deadly disease of sin. Also, in relationship with Christ, he offers love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.^[10] These virtues transcend MCS in importance and may even provide some relief and prevention from its ill-effects.

My intent is not to belittle or diminish the suffering you might be experiencing from a physical ailment like MCS. But I encourage you to experience whole-person healing and health—not merely of your physical body, but emotionally and spiritually as well. Christ extends forgiveness of sin freely for all who call on him. Trust in Christ today and experience healing from sin and its ravages.

You'll also discover that Jesus cares deeply about you and your physical and emotional suffering due to MCS. The comfort and encouragement he gives can give you stamina and tremendous relief. I can say with conviction, "If you have Christ, you really do have everything."^[11]



Rob Fischer has been writing professionally for over 35 years. His experience includes writing curricula, study guides, articles, blogs, newsletters, manuals, workbooks, training courses, workshops, and books. Rob has written for numerous churches, for Burlington Northern Railroad, Kaiser Aluminum, and Barton Publishing. He has also trained managers in effective business writing. Rob holds two Master's degrees, both focused heavily on writing. Rob has published eleven books and serves as an editor and ghostwriter for other authors.

Sources:

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^[2] Mark 7:15, Holy Bible. New Living Translation (NLT) copyright© 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of **Tyndale House Publishers Inc.**, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

^[3] Mark 8:36, NIV.

^[4] Curezone, "Multiple Chemical Sensitivity – MCS Cause," nd, <http://www.curezone.com/dis/read.asp?Co=83>.

^[5] CureZone, "Multiple Chemical Sensitivity – MCS – Prevention & Curing Protocol," nd, <http://www.curezone.com/dis/1.asp?Co=83>.

^[6] Ephesians 4:18, NIV.

^[7] Isaiah 53:4-5, NIV.

^[8] Romans 5:10, NIV.

^[9] Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9, NIV.

^[10] Galatians 5:22-23, NLT.

^[11] Philippians 3:7-9, NIV.

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