

## Chemical Sensitivity and Multiple Chemical Sensitivities

[| Main](#) | [| Sociopolitical](#) | [| Symptoms](#) | [| Indoor Air](#) | [| Sick Building](#) | [| Oasis Room](#) | [| Food & Water](#) | [| Treatment Research](#) | [| Bio](#) | [| Austin Air Cleaner](#) | [| Nutritional Supplements for MCS](#) | [| Links](#) |

### Katherine Whited, ND, NMD

## Sociopolitical Aspects of MCS

*The following Web Pages are by Katherine Whited, ND, NMD on Chemical Sensitivity. Most of the pages are from her book, "The Hidden Epidemic: Chemical Sensitivity and Multiple Chemical Sensitivities", which is a self-help book for people with MCS that also covers the social and political aspects of Chemical Sensitivity. These free Web Pages do not contain the chapters in their entirety, but are merely excerpts.*

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"Toxicology is traditionally defined as the study of the harmful effects of drugs, chemicals, and chemical mixtures on living organisms. Within the past two decades the environmental branch of toxicology has assumed a wider meaning. The survival of individuals and the human race alike is the ultimate goal of this area of study."  
*Environmental Toxicology, Sigmund F. Zakrzewski*

### **The Hidden Epidemic: Chemical Sensitivity and MCS**

#### **PREFACE**

According to the American Diabetes Association, 6% of the American population has diabetes. According to the National Academy of Sciences, and the Department of Health of New Mexico and California, 15% of the American population is chemically sensitive (CS). That means that twice as many people are afflicted with some form of chemical sensitivity including Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) than have diabetes. There are many programs funded by the government and industry to fight diabetes, why are there none to fight the larger problem of CS?

When the National Academy of Sciences stated in 1989 that 15% of the population is currently suffering from CS and MCS, why didn't the National Institutes of Health and other government agencies immediately put a plan of action into place to address this significant

and wide-spread health issue?

Since the 1950's, scientists and doctors helping people afflicted with MCS have been black listed and some have lost their license to practice. Why has this not raised red flags within the medical community?

Never before have industry and business tried to dispel the existence of an illness. Never before has a disease caused such controversy, confusion and intrigue. Tragically, there are many people whose lives are caught in the middle of this push and pull of money vs. health. They go on suffering, many without adequate healthcare or the disability income that is due them. In "The Hidden Epidemic: Chemical Sensitivity and MCS" you will discover the answers to these questions as well as learn many ways to help yourself and others afflicted with Chemical Sensitivity.

## **Chapter 1 IN THE BEGINNING**

In 1951, Dr. Theron Randolph published the first medical paper on Chemical Sensitivity (CS). In it he stated that synthetic chemicals found everyday indoors and outdoors was causing chronic illness, including CS. His paper was met with much resistance in the medical community and from industry. This is because chemical manufacturers own large pharmaceutical companies and the pharmaceutical companies have a profound influence over the medical community, including the AMA (The American Medical Association).

Since the end of World War II, the chemical industry has grown at a rapid rate. Due to the breakthroughs using hydrocarbons in chemical engineering, most of our food, clothing and building materials contain synthetic chemicals. Since World War II forward, we have socially tolerated poisons in our food and in the air we breathe as being part of "Better Living Through Chemistry".

Thus, we are inundated with toxic chemicals in western cultures. With the growing prevalence of synthetic chemicals has come the growing epidemic of CS and MCS. Because of this the chemical industry has formed well-organized lobby groups and other organizations, such as RISE, to refute that MCS exists. This is because MCS is caused by exposures to toxic chemicals, which makes the chemical manufacturer and the products that contain these toxic chemicals legally responsible for damages. This means a great loss of revenue for industry if, or

rather when they pay their victims.

As science proves the toxic affects of chemicals and as epidemiological studies prove that there is indeed an epidemic of CS, the more organized the chemical industry becomes. They have muddied the waters of science just as the tobacco industry did. They have been a large presence in all important discussions in the medical community regarding CS. Never before has industry had such a huge input into public health policy. Never before have doctors and healthcare professionals been prosecuted for treating an illness that industry claims does not exist.

Yet, emerging from this shroud of controversy is the fact that toxic chemicals are making people very sick. Chemical Sensitivity and Multiple Chemical Sensitivities affect millions of Americans everyday. People suffering with this disease have had to fight for their right to healthcare and those disabled from chemical injuries have had to fight for their disability rights.

The following table is a historical overview of the recognition of CS and MCS.

TABLE ONE

<b>1951</b> Dr. Theron Randolph publishes the first medical paper on chemical sensitivity.
<b>1965</b> The Society for Clinical Ecology is founded for doctors who treat CS and MCS. In 1984 it becomes the American Academy of Environmental Medicine.
<b>1975</b> Environmental control units are invented by Drs. Randolph and Rea to identify specific chemicals that evoke symptoms.
<b>1979</b> Through a court order, Social Security benefits are paid for a chemically injured person with MCS.
<b>1986</b> Workers' Compensation is paid to a chemically injured person with MCS. This also was court ordered.

**1987**

"Workers With MCS" is published in Occupational Medicine: State of the Art Reviews. In it Dr. Cullen states that the number of patients with CS at the Yale Occupational Medicine Program is growing.

**1988**

The Social Security Administration adds a section specific to MCS.

**1989**

A comprehensive report on MCS by the New Jersey Department of Health is published. It clearly states that MCS is a growing health problem that needs immediate attention.

**1989**

The first testimony regarding MCS is heard in the US Congress.

**1990**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recognizes MCS as a physical disability.

**1991**

The National Research Council convenes a workshop on MCS. The EPA and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences share sponsorship with the support of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATADR). In attendance are chemical company funded doctors and researchers who claimed that MCS and CS isn't a real illness.

**1991**

The Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics convenes a national meeting with the support of the US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, ATSDR on MCS.

**1994**

A conference on CS is sponsored by the ATSDR

**1995**

A prevalence study by the Environmental Health Investigations Branch of the California Department of Health Services find that 16% of the California population has CS.

**1997**

An epidemiological study done by the New Mexico Department of Health finds 15% of the New Mexico population has CS.

**1998**

A US government interagency workgroup states that MCS is a priority as a national environmental health problem.

**1998**

The following US state governors declare a "Multiple Chemical Sensitivities Awareness Week"

Connecticut  
Missouri  
New Mexico  
North Carolina

**1999**

The following US state governors declare a "Multiple Chemical Sensitivities Awareness Week"

Connecticut  
Illinois  
Minnesota  
Missouri  
New Mexico  
North Carolina  
Washington

**2000**

The following US states and cities declare a "Multiple Chemical Sensitivities Awareness Week"

Connecticut  
Florida  
Massachusetts  
Michigan (Detroit-Ann Arbor, Livonia)  
Mississippi  
North Carolina  
New Hampshire  
Washington

**2000**

British Society for Allergy, Environmental and

Nutritional Medicine identify MCS as an allergic response to environmental contamination, urging the government and other decision-makers to adopt policies, which will reduce people's overall toxic load.

**2001**

These US states declare a "Multiple Chemical Awareness Week"

Connecticut  
Hawaii  
Illinois  
Kansas  
Ohio  
Michigan  
Mississippi  
Missouri  
North Carolina  
Washington

**2001**

The Environmental Illness Society of Canada commissioned a socioeconomic study of MCS. It showed that 4 million Canadians are chemically sensitive. Among the most severe cases about 60% attempt suicide. MCS costs \$ 10 billion in lost productivity, about one billion in lost taxes and another one billion in healthcare costs

**2001**

The American Council on Education writes guidelines for accommodating students with MCS

**2002**

These state governors declare a "Multiple Chemical Sensitivities Awareness Week"

Connecticut  
Kansas  
North Carolina  
Mississippi  
Missouri  
Washington

**2003**

These states declare a "Multiple Chemical Awareness Week"

Connecticut  
Missouri  
North Carolina  
Massachusetts

**2003**

The Danish Ministry of The Environment publishes a report on MCS stating that 1% of the population of Denmark has MCS.

**2004**

These states declare a "Multiple Chemical Awareness Week"

Connecticut  
Florida  
Illinois  
Louisiana  
Michigan  
Missouri  
North Carolina  
Washington

[| Main](#) | [| Sociopolitical](#) | [| Symptoms](#) | [| Indoor Air](#) | [| Sick Building](#) | [| Oasis Room](#) | [| Food & Water](#) | [| Treatment Research](#) | [| Bio](#) | [| Austin Air Cleaner](#) | [| Nutritional Supplements for MCS](#) | [| Links](#) |