

Is Your Illness Chemical?

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In recent years the medical community has begun to see new and serious challenges—chemical related illness, chronic pain and fatigue from modern day environmental chemical exposures.

We are the first generation of man ever exposed to such an unprecedented number of chemicals. This has stressed the body's detoxification system as never before. Concomitantly, we are the first generation to eat processed foods stripped of many precious vitamins and minerals that enable the detoxification system to work. It is not only time that ages our body, it is the chemical abuse we subject it to.

The patient presents a multitude of symptoms that are often disabling and are referable to the many organ systems of the body; those particularly affected are the brain, nervous system and the immune system. The classic patient who has developed chemical sensitivity or Environmental Illness (E.I.) has been to several dozen specialists, but does not have a clear cut diagnosis. In most cases the patient is finally referred to a psychiatrist. Every medication you can think of has been tried and none of them work, in the end they are told, "It's all in your head. There is no reason for your illness and pain."

How do we become chemically sensitive?

Chemicals get into our body by three major routes. They are in the air, and we breathe them. Within seconds the capillary system of the lung absorbs them and they are spread through the body via the blood stream. You don't have to be able to smell something for it to be in your blood stream. Deadly, yet odorless, carbon monoxide has never been smelled by anyone. The second way for chemicals to enter our blood stream is by eating or drinking it. Many people do this with pesticides, additives, dyes and many other chemicals daily. The chemicals get absorbed into the bloodstream right along with the foods. The third and one of the easiest ways is through absorption, right through the skin. The skin absorption is excellent. More and more companies are manufacturing their products in patch form. Most people don't realize every cream, oil, powder or whatever you put on your skin is absorbed, the same as eating or drinking it. Millions of people use chemicals in their household, yard, garden and autos and don't think about the rapid absorption time. Make it a habit to wear long sleeve

shirts, slacks, gloves, hat and a mask so you don't absorb the chemicals. Wash thoroughly as soon as possible when you have finished. The longer you wait the more you absorb into your bloodstream.

If there are chemicals used where you work, special precautions must be taken to protect you by your employer. Latest research from the Academy of Environmental Medicine shows more than twenty million Americans work with chemicals known to damage the nervous system. Even minute amounts of different chemicals can cause damage. If you are forced to work in a toxic environment, take saunas on a regular basis and exercise until you work up a good sweat to get rid of chemicals absorbed by your body.

If you have allergies, try the natural substances available at your health food store rather than filling your body with antihistamines, decongestants, etc. Constant exposure to toxins such as solvents or pesticides can cause central nervous system depression, make you feel agitated, irritable, spacey, confused or even angry to the point of screaming. Sherry Rogers, M.D. and other clinical ecologists believe the road between exposure and environmental illness follows this pattern: constant exposure causes a person's detox pathway to overload, overwork, and eventually break down. This creates an accumulation of toxins that finally do the damage neurologically and immunologically, and you have classic E.I.

If I walk into a fabric store, within seconds I begin to wheeze, sneeze, get a headache and feel very anxious. Why? Synthetic or polyester fabrics contain a high level of formaldehyde. I feel bad for hours.

One of my patients complained of anxiety and muscle spasms. Upon questioning her about her work area, she described a large planter behind her desk. The planter contained moist soil which is high in molds, plus the office was sprayed monthly for bugs...more toxins! Her physician had given her Xanax for the anxiety and muscle spasms; but one week after she moved her desk, the symptoms stopped—so did the Xanax!

Some patients will display many symptoms, others only a few due to biochemical individuality. Everyone's toxic saturation point will be different and so will the therapy. The symptoms list along with the needed supplements is extensive. If you feel you are suffering from E.I. or have chemical sensitivities, read the *E.I. Syndrome, Tired or Toxic, Wellness Against*

All Odds by Sherry Rogers, M.D. or view Dr. Doris Rapp's video, *Environmentally Sick Schools*. One last point, be aware of food allergies masking themselves as hyperactivity. I've seen hundreds of children with both E.I. and food allergies diagnosed as hyperactivity and placed on Ritalin. Doris Rapp, M.D., one of the foremost authorities in the country on allergies and E.I., states food allergies in children can mimic many illnesses and hyperactivity. We are now at a point where we must be aware of what we smell, eat, drink and touch—and live a non-toxic lifestyle.

Resources:

Rapp, Doris, M.D., *Is This Your Child?* New York, NY: Morrow, 1991

Rogers, Sherry, M.D., *The E.I. Syndrome*, Sarasota, FL: SK Publishing, 1995

Rogers, Sherry, M.D., *Tired or Toxic?* Syracuse, NY: Prestige Publishers, 2000

Rogers, Sherry, M.D., *Wellness Against All Odds*, Syracuse, NY: Prestige Publishers, 1995

Environmentally Sick Schools, VHS video tape by Doris Rapp, M.D.

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