

This is a shorter version of the newspaper article and is to be used as a letter to the editor. This version is 300 words, which complies with most newspaper's word limits.

Letter to the Editor

May is MCS Awareness Month. If you've never heard of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), you're not alone. I didn't know about it until I started developing symptoms myself.

MCS is a condition in which a person develops severe and debilitating symptoms from exposure to chemicals and fragrances. Some of the products that cause these reactions include perfume/cologne; fragranced laundry detergent, fabric softener, and dryer sheets; fragranced soap/shampoo; tobacco and wood smoke; air fresheners; and cleaning products made with harsh detergents, solvents, or fragrances.

MCS is increasingly prevalent in today's society because we continually choose to manufacture our products and conduct our industries using incredibly hazardous chemicals. We continually choose convenience and the dollar bill over people and health. MCS is caused by chronic exposure to these chemicals – there was no MCS before we began using them.

Many people with MCS become chronically ill and have to isolate themselves from friends, family, and society to be well. And although some people do recover, it takes an incredible amount of time, research, money, and diligence to do so. Sadly, there have been many deaths and suicides as well.

MCS is a societal disease – meaning it is man-made – and if we created it, we also have the power to put an end to it. Every person who stops using fragranced products is making a difference. Every organization that makes an effort to detoxify their workplace or make healthier products is making a difference. This is what it's going to take – one by one, people have to start caring enough to make changes in their lives. For many, these changes require very little effort yet are incredibly large in effect.

To learn more about MCS and how to go fragrance-free to protect your own health, please check out www.ThinkBeforeYouStink.com.

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