Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Encyclopedia Article

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

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Contents

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity.....3

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

Regarded by skeptics as a manifestation of "technophobia" and "chemophobia," multiple chemical sensitivity is a highly controversial disorder associated with low levels of environmental **chemicals** in general and volatile organic chemicals in particular. Sufferers experience fatigue, malaise, headache, dizziness, lack of concentration, and loss of memory, and are often so disabled that they cannot live or work except in completely chemical-free environments. Critics argue that this condition should not receive clinical recognition as a disease, insisting that the condition has no uniform cause or consistent, measurable features. Advocates for sufferers say it is a chronic condition marked by heightened sensitivity to even slight chemical exposures; and that multiple symptoms occur in multiple organ systems, usually caused by large "triggering" exposures such as to new carpeting that emits chemicals.