

# MCS Information

## MCS-Aware

Are you sensitive to perfumes, cleaning products, exhaust fumes, foods or mobile phones? MCS-Aware is a registered charity providing information and support to those suffering from chemical, food and electro-sensitivities. They are the only UK charity dedicated to Environmental Illness.

We are delighted to report that MCS Aware are offering readers a free sample magazine by email or by post. For your free copy go to:

<http://www.mcs-aware.org/images/resources/Sample%20Magazine%20ONLINE%202013.pdf>

Or for a paper copy write to:  
**MCS-Aware, 56 Gaping Lane,  
Hitchin, Herts. SG5 2JE**

Benefits of membership include a quarterly magazine, regular online newsletters, forum and support group. For a paper information pack write to the address above, or for more information see the website:

**[www.mcs-aware.org](http://www.mcs-aware.org)**

*Other Useful MCS Websites:*

**<http://www.multiplechemicalsensitivity.org/>**

**[http://www.webmd.com/allergies/  
multiple-chemical-sensitivity](http://www.webmd.com/allergies/multiple-chemical-sensitivity)**

## Housing Survey

MCS Aware is conducting a Housing Survey Questionnaire to improve UK housing for people with Environmental Illness (E.I). They are trying to reach as many people with chemical and electro-sensitivities as possible and would really appreciate it if you could support them carrying out the survey which can be found at the following link:

**[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MCS\\_Aware\\_Housing\\_Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MCS_Aware_Housing_Survey)**

## MCS and Home Care

We are aware that members with MCS can struggle to have this taken into account when it comes to delivery of home care. With this in mind, it may be helpful to cite what the *full* version of the 'CFS/ME' clinical guideline from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence states about this:

Chapter 7      People with severe CFS/ME  
Section 7.4.1    Home Support

“A full functional assessment of the personal and domestic needs of the patient within the home should be completed (for example, people with severe CFS/ME are often sensitive to light, noise and chemicals, so may require quiet, dark surroundings with no or limited use of household products such as cleaning products or air fresheners), as well as an assessment of the carer’s needs.” (p307)

# Electrical Sensitivity

*(reproduced from the MSC Aware website)*

## What is electrical sensitivity?

As the amount of electromagnetic pollution increases, more people are developing Electrical Sensitivity (ES). About 2.5 % of the population are now thought to be affected to some degree, although they may be unaware of it. The first signs are often headaches, warmth or a burning sensation in the face, a tingling, stinging feeling or a rash after using appliances like mobile phones or computers. If early symptoms are ignored, sensitivity usually increases. Severe sufferers can be often forced to live in remote areas without any form of electricity, mobile phones or wireless appliances, and away from phone masts, radar etc.

## Diagnosis

Diagnosis is usually made by the sufferer as they notice their symptoms get worse when they use a certain appliance or are in a particular place. ES can start after prolonged use of things like mobile phones, computers etc or exposure to strong electromagnetic fields. Individuals are more likely to be susceptible if they are already stressed or ill.

## Recognition

Sweden is the only country to officially recognise ES as a 'physical impairment' and offer help to sufferers. However, the World Health Organisation (WHO) acknowledge Electrical Sensitivity as a "real and sometimes disabling condition". The first WHO International Conference on ES took place in October 2004.

In September 2007 the EU's European Environment Agency expressed concern about the long term and cumulative effects of electromagnetic radiation from the rapidly expanding new technologies. They said it would be prudent for health authorities to recommend action to reduce exposures, especially to vulnerable groups.

Electrical Sensitivity is also known as Electrical Oversensitivity (EO), electromagnetic stress or Electrical Hypersensitivity (EH or EHS).

## EHS Symptoms

People who suffer from Electro-Hypersensitivity (EHS) commonly experience any or several of the following:

- Warmth or tingling like sunburn
- A stinging or pricking sensation in the face or body
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Poor memory
- Reduced concentration and clarity of thought
- Dry sinuses, throat or eyes
- Nausea
- Aches and pains in the muscles, joints or teeth
- Palpitations
- Sleep disturbance.

The list is not exclusive, and a lot of symptoms are similar to those of chemical and food sensitivity. The Environmental Health Center in Dallas reported that out of 500 patients treated for Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), 80% also had electrical sensitivities. However, not everyone with ES develops chemical or food intolerance.

## Triggers

Most sufferers find they react to a particular range of frequencies at a certain level, for instance: radio

waves (Rf), microwaves (eg mobile phones, masts or WiFi), electrical or magnetic fields. Some people find their symptoms gradually get worse and last for longer periods or they start reacting to more and more triggers. Some sufferers also become sensitive to light, (Photosensitivity *is* a recognised medical condition). Common triggers include mobile phones and masts, WiFi, SatNav systems, microwave and electric ovens, TV, computers and monitors, fluorescent and low-energy lights, digital or wireless phones, electromagnetic fields from cars, trains, powerlines, substations, bad house wiring, and other electrical or wireless appliances in the home or workplace.

Individuals affected by multiple sensitivities can find it difficult to pinpoint the source of their reactions. Since symptoms often improve when the trigger is removed, sufferers can find it helpful to unplug appliances and switch off lighting and electrical circuits to see if it relieves symptoms.

### **EHS Treatment**

There is no simple cure for Electro-Hypersensitivity, but most sufferers find their symptoms improve when they avoid exposure. Once a sufferer has worked out what's causing their illness, they can protect themselves using shielding materials or by moving away from the source. Using an appliance less, turning it off (phones and WiFi can be replaced with cabled versions), unplugging appliances when not in use, and sitting or sleeping away from problem sources can all help.

Occasionally individuals can experience flu-like withdrawal symptoms for a day or two as their body re-adjusts. Many people with both ES and MCS have found their electrical sensitivities improve when their chemical sensitivity is treated. Likewise, reducing exposure to ES triggers can improve chemical and food sensitivities, as it reduces the body's total load.

Janice Tunnicliffe, developed EHS after she received chemotherapy for bowel cancer three years ago. Her story appeared in the Daily Telegraph. She suffers headaches, chest pain, nausea and tingling in her arms and legs whenever she is near electrical devices. She said, "iPhones make me feel really sick within about 20 minutes of being near one. Wi-Fi makes me feel like I have a clamp at the back of my head, which is squeezing the life out of me. It's completely draining and a home hub can totally immobilise me - I'm left unable to move my arms and legs."

Various meters are available to test for and measure electrical, magnetic and microwave frequencies. The more expensive ones tend to be more sensitive to a greater range of levels. Shielding can be as simple as layers of earthed aluminium foil, or more expensive, purpose-made wiring, paint or fabrics. Care needs to be taken when selecting and using shielding materials as they can make things worse if not used properly. Some ES products may not be suitable for people who are also affected by chemical sensitivity. For products and services that measurably reduce the amount of EMF exposure, download the ES Directory UK at :

<http://www.esdirectory.org.uk/>