

Support group conference calls are held every Sunday at 2 pm Eastern. We cover members' questions and discussion topics, and also share empathy and social support.

Faces of MCS. This is a new project suggested by our member, Dorothy in NY. The purpose is to help people with MCS engage with others (family, friends, businesses, social events, etc.) by teaching communication strategies, providing educational resources about MCS, and sharing our personal stories about engaging with the community. As Dorothy says, "We need to be heard and understood."

The first **Faces of MCS** meeting will be Wednesday, April 4, on the above conference line at 2 pm Eastern Time. We will hold meetings the first Wednesday of each month after that. Topics for April 4 include Dorothy and Deborah's story about their fragrance-free advocacy at a local retail store, and teaching from the book, [Nonviolent Communication](#) by Marshall Rosenberg.

Inspiration: *"Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here."* -Taken from *DESIDERATA*

We always appreciate members submitting items for the quote, jokes or inspiration section.

MCS Housing Projects Conference Call will be Wednesday, April 18th at 2 pm Eastern Time. It's open to the public, so please let all your friends know! The dial-in number is 712-770-4010, access code 735-129#. We hope to feature an organic ranch in Texas that has trailer and camping spots available and other MCS housing opportunities. If you know of a project we should feature, please let us know. Recordings of past conferences are available by dialing 712-770-4019, access code 735-129#.

Behind the Scenes. MCS Friends welcomed another new board member this winter, Norm DeLisle of the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition. Thank you for your service, Norm! We also established a new bank account, so we are again able to accept donations by check. Our [PayPal](#) link on our [website](#) is a way to donate by debit or credit card even if you don't have a PayPal account.

We would like to send sympathy cards to members or their immediate family that are going through hospitalization, the loss of loved ones, etc. If you would like to participate in sending cards occasionally, or if you know someone who would appreciate a sympathy card, please let us know. Thanks!

The Ontario, Canada, Task Force on MCS has issued its [preliminary report](#). "Despite compelling scientific evidence that ME/CFS, FM and ES/MCS are real, these conditions have not been adequately recognized by health policy makers, health care professionals

and their educators, employers, or society at large. This lack of recognition has been the biggest single barrier to improving care and support for Ontarians with these conditions.”

Findings: There is a lack of knowledge, recognition, lack of research, and a shortage of skilled providers, a lack of timely, appropriate care and treatments, and a lack of support for family caregivers.

Recommendations: Change the conversation, develop a common understanding, including case definitions and clinical practice guidelines for ME/CFS, FM and ES/MCS, and lay the groundwork for a person-centred system of care. Improve access and accommodation in the health system, increase the number of knowledgeable providers.

National Prevalence and Effects of Multiple Chemical Sensitivities, a survey study conducted by [Dr. Anne Steinemann](#), was published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Here are excerpts from the abstract of the paper:

A nationally representative cross-sectional population-based sample of 1,137 adult Americans was surveyed in June 2016.

RESULTS: Among the population, 12.8% report medically diagnosed MCS and 25.9% report chemical sensitivity. Of those with MCS, 86.2% experience health problems, such as migraine headaches, when exposed to fragranced consumer products; 71.0% are asthmatic; 70.3% cannot access places that use fragranced products such as air fresheners; and 60.7% lost workdays or a job in the past year due to fragranced products in the workplace.

CONCLUSION: Prevalence of diagnosed MCS has increased over 300%, and self-reported chemical sensitivity over 200%, in the past decade. Reducing exposure to fragranced products could help reduce adverse health and societal effects.

Organic city: Portland, Maine bans toxic pesticides on public and private property. ([NaturalHealth365](#)) At the beginning of 2018, the City Council of Portland, Maine decided in a unanimous vote (9-0) to restrict toxic pesticide use in favor of safer organic methods. The decision applies to all lands and yards in the city, both private and public. Unfortunately, due to national preemption laws, Maine is one of just a few states where localities are *allowed* to ban pesticides.

Emissions from volatile chemical products like perfumes, paints and other scented consumer items now rival vehicles as a pollution source in greater Los Angeles, according to a [surprising new NOAA-led study](#). (Maybe not so surprising to those of us with MCS!) Even though 15 times more petroleum is consumed as fuel than is used as ingredients in industrial and consumer products, the amount of chemical vapors emitted to the atmosphere in scented products is roughly the same, said lead author Brian McDonald.

The magazine [Newsweek](#) reports that **regular use of cleaning sprays** can have as much of

an impact on health as smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, according to a new study. Scientists at Norway's University of Bergen tracked 6,000 people, with an average age of 34 at the time of enrollment in the study, who used the cleaning products over a period of two decades, according to the research [published in the American Thoracic Society's American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine](#). They found that lung function decline in women who regularly used the products, such as those who worked as cleaners, was **equivalent to those with a 20-cigarette daily smoking habit**.

Environmental Health News: It's time to rethink chemical exposures - "safe" levels are doing damage according to a new study, [Low-level toxicity of chemicals: No acceptable levels?](#) Some of the most common chemicals including particulate matter, asbestos, tobacco smoke and benzene appear to be proportionally more harmful to a person's health at the lower levels of exposure, according to this new review of decades of research. The key word here is proportionally—smoking three packs of cigarettes a day for 40 years is obviously worse for your lungs than a little secondhand smoke from time to time. However, for the nonsmoker exposed to secondhand smoke, the risk is "extraordinarily large," Lanphear said. "If we took this research seriously, **we could prevent a lot of death and disease and disability**," Lanphear said. "**And that makes me hopeful.**" For example: In Scotland, a smoking ban in public places led to a 20 percent reduction in heart attacks among nonsmoking adults. It also led to a 15 percent reduction in preterm births among nonsmoking pregnant women.

Classifieds:

***Nevada:** I need physical help in exchange for housing. I own my own home on 3 acres with mountains all around. The only industry here is tourism. Even the locals tend to be perfume free, making it easy to socialize with others. The air is safe, the views are awesome, moderate climate. Love, Light. Mary www.meadowmary.com*

***Bert Suttle**, an MCS Friends member, has been using air purifiers for 17 years and in business as an authorized dealer selling these for over 5 years: Airpura, Aireox, Austin Air and E. L. Foust. MCS Friends members will get a discount. www.airfiltersnc.com. All prices on websites are required to be the same, Call 828-684-0772 for best price.*

Terry Sopher "Healthy Home Products." Discounts for fellow MCS Friends members. Air cleaners & filtration media, water filters, organic bedding, non-toxic body care & zero-VOC supplies; DouglasLabs, HealthyOrigins & Natren supplements. Indoor air tele-consults. Licensed, authorized dealer. HealthyHomeProducts@verizon.net 703-801-2565. MCS Friends does not endorse products or services. We are a 501(c)(3) registered in MI; donations are tax deductible. [We are registered with Amazon's Smile cash back program.](#)