



MCS America  
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# MCSA NEWS

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# Multiple Chemical Sensitivity



# Beleaguered, Part 1

# Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Beleaguered

**“If  
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## Part I

Several studies published from 1993-2005 suggest that at least 45 million men, women, and children in the US report various symptoms of multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS).<sup>1-8</sup> Seventy percent of these people have not been diagnosed properly by a health care provider.<sup>1-8</sup> More severe cases often lead to permanent and total disability.

The recurring question is “Why is MCS not yet acknowledged by many medical professionals in the community?” It’s not disregarded because it’s not a real illness, or researchers lack scientific data. It’s not ignored for lack of the epidemic rate of affliction that currently exceeds the rate of autism. It’s not misunderstood for lack of treatment modalities. Rather, multiple chemical sensitivity is intentionally

cast aside for industry profits.

Largely to protect their own financial interests and liability, a well-funded pharmaceutical and chemical industry campaign of disinformation

was designed to cast manufactured doubt over the existence of MCS. This campaign is crucial to the continued sales and use of chemicals and implies that chemicals are safe and MCS is merely psychological, having nothing to do with chemical exposure.

Select doctors have been paid handsome sums by industry to issue industry supported statements, conduct studies to industry specifications, and issue opinions on MCS that lead others, including doctors, lawmakers, and community members, to believe that the biased findings were truthful. We’ve seen this over and over again in studies that claim child abuse, stress, anxiety, or depression causes MCS. Yet when thinking critically, one can easily see the intended deception.

If confronted with damage their chemicals have caused, industry typically feels threatened, denies the problem, blames the victim, and accepts no responsibility. They turn their backs on those they’ve harmed. Unconscionably, they continue to allow their products to injure people, resulting in chronic and often disabling illnesses, including multiple chemical sensitivity. Admitting MCS is real is damaging to their profits and they want MCS to disappear at the expense of the individuals and families of those they’ve harmed.



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This deceptive campaign has convinced many government officials and medical providers that MCS is not real and has led to statements such as this one from Tee Guidotti, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.O.E.M., President, American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. "Occupational and Environmental Medicine does a great, unrecognized service to medicine as a first line of defense against questionable practice. Our role is frequently to explain patiently, to review the evidence, to say no, and sometimes to take abuse. We are a frequent target of activists who disagree with evidence-based medicine on issues such as multiple chemical sensitivity, dental amalgam disease, and toxic mold."<sup>10</sup> And while Dr. Guidotti claims that activists disagree with evidence-based medicine, he fails to address evidence-based, peer-reviewed studies that have shown various abnormalities in MCS patients, including cardiac abnormalities reactive upper airway disease, vasculitis, thrombophlebitis, impaired Phase I and Phase II detoxi-

function/auto-immune disorders, vitamin and mineral deficiencies<sup>1</sup>, neurocognitive decline, rhinitis, sinusitis, respiratory inflammation, abnormal methacholine challenge, somatosensory abnormality, peripheral neuropathy, sleep disturbance, impaired balance, reduced blood flow to the brain, and elevated levels of xenobiotics among others.<sup>11-40</sup>

The supposed controversy over MCS is to be solely credited to industry, who feeds an illegitimate view of MCS. Tactics have been employed to discredit sufferers, doctors, and scientists who pursue MCS. These tactics include labeling evidence-based, peer-reviewed science that shows MCS is real as junk science, labeling doctors who treat MCS as quacks, labeling treatment protocols as quackery, and laboratory tests that show abnormalities in MCS patients as unreliable. Worse, loved ones who try to help sufferers are told they are enabling the person's "belief" that they are sick.

Industry has also infiltrated MCS support groups, agencies, and organizations in an attempt to create controversy and disagreement among sufferers, their family, and their medical providers. With the MCS community busy fighting among themselves, industry is safe from efforts to reveal the truth. Despite the fact that the community is aware of this, the conflict continues because industry plants assume roles of community members and continue manufacture perceived controversy and trick the community into taking sides.



**“Many researchers cannot get their legitimate studies published and the information never reaches doctors and medical providers.”**

A recent revelation showed that only studies that supported a dangerous depression drugs safety and efficacy were published. The studies that showed the harmful effects of the drug were not submitted for publication by the pharmaceutical company. This supports the power industry has in suppressing the truth. Doctors are misled because they only see the published studies and rely on them to make decisions when treating patients. Everyone is then led to believe that what these doctors know is the honest truth, rather than the desire of the chemical industry. As misinformation grows rapidly, patients may be harmed, and lives may be ruined, all in the name of industry profits. MCS testimony has even been blocked from admission in lawsuits, likely a result of industry gifts to judges.

Financial ties to industry lead to industry support. This is not limited to the chemical industry. The pharmaceutical industry and chemical industry are hopelessly intertwined, many companies producing both chemicals and drugs. Because the pharmaceutical companies largely control all the peer-reviewed journals that publish evidence-based scientific data, legitimate studies supporting the existence of MCS are denied publication. Many researchers cannot get their legitimate studies published and the information never reaches doctors and medical providers. Studies that can't be published cannot gain funding. If there is no funding, few independent studies are possible. Medical conferences are often funded by pharmaceutical companies as well, leading to more tight industry control over conference content.

In the interim, people with MCS suffer greatly. They are denied work accommodations, school accommodations, appropriate health care, proper housing, and disability benefits. The doubt that industry casts on MCS carries through to friends, family, and social support services, forcing sufferers to endure hurtful comments, denial of accommodations, disrespect, and in some cases harassment.

Without care and understanding, sufferers who could otherwise go to school, work, and lead normal lives are denied their livelihood, friends, family, and hobbies. Instead they become an unwilling social burden on society.



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**“Medical conferences are often funded by pharmaceutical companies.”**

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