Scientific Study

Teenagers Increasingly Affected by Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) is increasing in prevalence. It is a condition that knows no bounds, affecting every age, every ethnicity, and both genders.

People with multiple chemical sensitivity experience negative health effects when exposed to low levels of commonly encountered chemicals normally deemed as safe. These health effects are reproducible with the same exposure and are alleviated when the exposure ceases. Multiple organ systems are affected by low levels of chemicals in this population. The most debilitating of these symptoms are neurological and include functional impairment, cognitive difficulty, and general dysfunction of the central nervous system.

MCS is a disabling condition in that chemicals such as perfume, air freshener, cleaning products, laundry products, vehicle exhaust, new carpets, newspapers, and other commonly encountered substances create an invisible barrier to access for its victims. Further, barriers are created by lack of understanding from friends, family, and medical practitioners.

The overall prevalence of reported chemical sensitivity in the population is approximately 15% with nearly half of those diagnosed by a physician. Many are disabled by MCS, unable to access schools, employment, shopping, and social events. The youngest reported chemical sensitivity was found in a toddler.

Andersson and colleagues, researchers in Sweeden, conducted a survey which found the prevalence of MCS in teenagers to be 15.6%, roughly the same as the general population of adults. Of those surveyed, 3.7% were severely affected with affective and behavioral changes.

Risk factors for developing MCS, according to researchers, include noise sensitivity and female gender.

Andersson asserts, "chemical sensitivity problems seem to be present also in teenagers, although less so than in adults. Furthermore, chemical sensitivity seems to be related to other environmental sensitivities."

The increasing prevalence of MCS in younger people is a grave concern. In general, the health of children has declined dramatically since 1980 and has been correlated with the sudden increases in vaccinations, industrial pollution, and chemical disinfectants such as hand sanitizer, aerosol sprays, and other cleaning agents, which all contain neurotoxic compounds. The result has been a rise in asthma, sudden infant death, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and now, MCS.

Our young people need our attention now, for they are the future generation. As a responsible society, it is crucial that we quickly examine the impact vaccinations, industrial pollution, and chemicals have on children. Without our children, we have no future.

Reference

Andersson L, Johansson A, Millqvist E, Nordin S, Bende M. Prevalence and risk factors for chemical sensitivity and sensory hyperreactivity in teenagers. Int J Hyg Environ Health. 2008 Apr 8.