

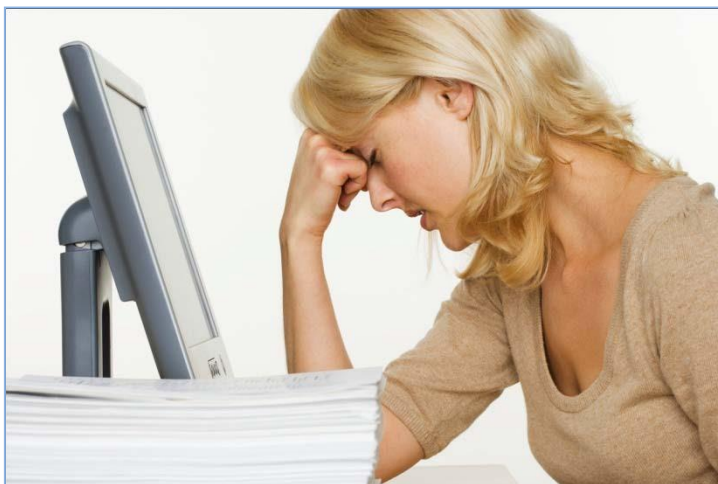
Electrical Sensitivity



As the amount of electromagnetic pollution increases, more people are developing Electro-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.



Symptoms

Sufferers 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.

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).

Triggers

Most sufferers find they react to a particular range of frequencies at a certain level, for instance: pulsed microwave radiation (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. Some people find their symptoms improve when they go away to areas that don't have phone masts or WiFi.

Treatment

There is no simple cure, 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. The further away you are from the source, the lower the electromagnetic field. 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.

Help

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. You can download a list of suppliers and the ES Directory from www.MCS-Aware.org or send us 4 second class stamps for a paper copy.

More Information

Electromagnetic Man: Health and Hazard in the Electrical Environment by Dr Cyril W Smith & Simon Best (1989), published by Dent, ISBN 0-460-04698-5. Available from www.amazon.co.uk

The Powerwatch Handbook by Alasdair and Jean Philips, published by Piatkus, ISBN 0-7499-2686-4. Available from bookshops and the Powerwatch website which also offers advice and products for ES.

www.powerwatch.org.uk

www.ES-UK.info UK support group. BM Box ES-UK, London, WC1N 3XX. Email: enquirers@es-uk.info

www.healthy-house.co.uk Meters and products for ES and MCS Tel: 01453 752216

www.Lessemf.com American site offering good range of ES products and advice. Tel: +1 518 608 6479

www.Purenature24.com German website offering meters and products for ES and MCS Tel: 0049 6784

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