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Some management strategies for MCS

Create a checklist

When experiencing MCS, it can be extremely challenging to manage your health on a daily basis. Here are some strategies that you can use that could make life easier for you. For all of these steps you can set phone reminders, add them to your calendar, or carry a physical list so that you can check things off as you complete them.

- 1. Plan your Day.** Ensure that your basic needs will be met. Thoroughly plan all of these steps out to ensure you will have time and space to eat, drink water, relax, exercise and take your supplements if necessary. Try making a to do list with a timeframe for each of these activities throughout the day so that you can keep track of them. For example, setting phone reminders or an alarm to notify you when you plan to take breaks can make all the difference

At around noon, reassess your energy level, and change your plan for the day accordingly.

You can also schedule tasks that may risk exposures to triggers immediately before returning home. For example, running errands such as shopping or going to the bank and then going straight home can help you to limit the length of your exposure to chemicals.

- 2. What to do after an exposure.**

- a. Immediately leave the location that is affecting you.
- b. Ask friends or relatives to remind you to do so.
- c. Remain calm. Use breathing techniques to get you through difficult times.
- d. Go home, quickly remove your clothes and put them in the washer, take a shower, wash your hair, and put on clean clothes.
- e. If you are being seen by a specialist in environmental medicine, follow their instructions as soon as possible to relieve symptoms.





- 3. Before Going Out.** Make sure to use the washroom before you leave, as most public restroom facilities are full of fragrances. Dress comfortably with comfortable clothes and walking shoes, and make sure to bring any items that will be important to your wellbeing including food, water, and anything to help reduce symptoms. Make sure to have easy to reach phone numbers of people that you can count on in case of an emergency. For example, set their numbers to speed dial, write them down on a piece of paper to put in your pocket or bag.
- 4. Returning Home.** Once you return home, remove your clothes and put them in the wash. Take a shower, wash your hair and put on clean clothes to lessen your exposures to the harmful substances.
- 5. Take care of yourself.** Pay attention to your basic needs, whether you are hungry, thirsty, or need rest. Pay attention to your breathing as well and try to remain calm. Your day may not always go exactly as you have planned. Be patient with yourself. You are not responsible for what is happening to you. Take each day as it comes.
- 6. For other spaces and people you will be interacting with.** Don't be shy, you can always politely ask for accommodation. Ask friends and relatives not to use scented or toxic products. Instead, you can provide them with an alternative list of cleaning and personal care products that you can tolerate. Before you interact with them make sure they don't smell of smoke or fragrances. If you have to enter a space with air that is polluted, try opening windows unless the outside air is polluted as well. In that case, refrain from entering such a space. If you do enter unknowingly, remove yourself from these polluted spaces as quickly as possible. Finally, ensure areas around you are free of mold.

Hopefully some of these tools can help you to ensure your health and wellbeing. Next month we will provide tips for deliveries and repair personnel entering your home.

Read the checklist here:

<http://www.hypersensibiliteenvironnementale.com/images/pdfs/en/8-checklist.pdf>

**If you have tips, tricks, or resources that you would like to share with our members please consider writing for our newsletter, or sharing them with ASEQ-EHAQ.*