

Opinion

# *Preying on the Desperate Miracle Cures Hold False Promise*

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## **The History of Health Scams**

People with incurable illnesses are often the target of miracle cure scams. These promises usually involve the marketing of unproven cures for a fee. Often the cure is easy and painless and the aggressive marketing is loaded with lucrative testimonials and success stories in bold fonts and bright colors with flashing text and lots of exclamation points.

They come in the form of websites, word-of-mouth, multi level marketing, e-mail marketing, printed ads, mail, telemarketing, and the backs of traveling wagons.

The danger is not merely the wasting of time and precious money to purchase these cures. In addition, these miracle cures often delay appropriate medical care. Some may even be harmful or interact with prescription medications in a negative way.

These scams are often widely touted by the chronically ill because they offer false hope. When one is sick, scared, in pain, and desperate for relief, the promise of being cured is easy to grasp onto. However, the pain of being duped and realizing it was only false hope can be devastating.

## **Ten Warning Signs of a Scam**

1. The Promise Of A Quick And Easy Cure
2. Presents Unproven Patient Testimonials & Emotional Appeals Instead Of Science
3. Claims To Cure Many Ailments Which Have No Cure In Medical Science
4. It's Not Sold In Stores
5. It Has Undisclosed Ingredients Or Content
6. You Have To Keep At It To Get Results
7. It Doesn't Work Because You Did It Wrong
8. Science Hasn't Even Bothered To Discredit It (No Threat To Pharmaceutical Sales)
9. The Seller Lacks A Medical Degree Or Similar Qualification
10. It's Too Good To Be True



**“People  
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### **Targeted For A Scam**

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia (FM), and multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) are debilitating illnesses which have no cure and leave sufferers lives in ruins. Even those with the best ability to adapt and cope often suffer from the abuse of other well-meaning people who think the ill somehow brought these illnesses upon themselves or that the illnesses don't really exist. This can create a situation of desperation in which a patient is willing to try anything to get better.

Another thing that creates desperation is a persons unwillingness or difficulty to accept a change of circumstances, such as what occurs when a person with MCS must avoid contact with everything they once believed was safe. Life as it was known no longer exists. Friends, family, home, and career plans are all drastically affected. If a person has trouble accepting the new reality and isn't willing or able to create a new life within this new set of circumstances and limitations, desperation can set in.

CFS has had its share of miracle cures. The recent discovery XMRV Retrovirus has led to the potential that this virus is the cause of CFS. Many CFS patients have been delighted with this news because it gives their illness long-awaited legitimacy. Still others are not so happy, believing that the drug companies may be behind this discovery with nothing more than intent to market a profitable new drug. Irregardless, in the face of emerging viral evidence, XMRV is now a newly emerged threat for purported cures.

People with MCS are also coerced into unproven treatments. Often, these treatments consist of over-simplified and unsupported views on a single barely-relevant component of a vastly multi-dimensional illness. These over-simplified treatments give false hope and address something that the person can quickly and easily address, such as the amygdala.

### **An Example of a Medical Scam**

The amygdala is an almond shaped part of the limbic system of the brain. It is believed to be responsible for regulating emotions and fear responses. It is also called into action to 'alert' a person to dangers, such as a toxic chemical exposure. Studies have shown that breathing carbon dioxide can trigger panic attacks because the carbon dioxide toxicity alerts the amygdala, generating a fear response... the body's way of saying, "Get away; you are being poisoned."

Because most people are not aware of the many chemicals around them and many chemicals such as carbon dioxide are completely odorless, the connection between the amygdala's response and the 'flight or fight' panic response is not made on an intellectual level. The resulting panic attack appears to be an irrational fear, when in reality the amygdala is a sensor which functions as an alert to various dangers.

**“Fear  
and  
toxicity  
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another.”**

In some people, it is possible that fear responses can become exaggerated and turn into a vicious cycle. Since people new to MCS are not informed about all the toxic chemicals in everyday products and materials, they may be given a lot of misinformation about what is really going on. Articles which claim MCS is a disorder about smells instead of a response to toxic chemicals increase ignorance of the truth. This can establish a fear of smells in some people, along with inadequate responses to real toxic threats. Through continued exposure to toxic chemicals that injure brain and body processes, the damage becomes more complex both physically and emotionally because more and more biological systems are involved.

More than one health scam purports to cure CFS and MCS by retraining the amygdala to eliminate fear. Unfortunately, these scams rely on an overly simplistic view of complex multi-system illnesses... a view which ignores vast biological evidence of reduced liver function, cellular inflammation, oxidative stress, endocrine disruption, central nervous system changes, and other symptoms which result from poisoning and are not the result of a simple panic attack. The view is so simplistic that it relies on the mistaken belief that MCS and CFS are just fear and completely ignores the biochemical damage done by toxic chemicals... the very thing the amygdala's alert function is designed to prevent.

Therefore, therapies aimed at reducing the sensory action of the amygdala so that it does not alert one to get away before the harmful effect of a chemical exposure cause physiological damage only serves to increase the danger from the harmful effects of these substances. Fear and toxicity are independent of one another.

To date, we are not aware of anyone who has recovered any semblance of a normal life without first making major changes to facilitate healing. Having a safe, non-toxic home where one can avoid exposures is of primary importance. Making adjustments to diet, learning about food sensitivities, eating organic foods, drinking highly filtered water, and using targeted supplements to help repair cellular and other damage is also required. After these changes, it is quite possible that emotional therapies and amygdala retraining can help the few people who have failed to adapt and cope well with these changes. But emotional therapies and amygdala retraining won't remove poisons or cure CFS, MCS, or FM.

Examining the various amygdala retraining claims, it is easy to see that all ten warning signs of a scam are present.

### **The Promise of a Quick and Easy Cure**

*People are told a simple brain exercise they can do at home will cure them.*

### **Presents Unproven Patient Testimonials & Emotional Appeals Instead of Science**

*The websites and material abundantly claim cures and provide emotional testimonials designed to give false hope. Materials flash, have capital letters, and brightly colored text to get your attention. No scientific evidence or proof of cure can be found.*



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### **Claims to Cure Many Ailments Which Have No Cure in Medical Science**

*These amygdala retraining programs claim to cure MCS, FM, CFS, depression, anxiety, and a host of other illnesses... none of which can be cured by medical science. MCS, CFS, and FM experiments involving successful amygdala retraining which results in remission cannot be found in the scientific literature.*

### **It's Not Sold in Stores**

*It's not sold in stores and it's not written about in books. The techniques are kept top secret and are often only taught in expensive workshops for a high fee.*

### **It Has Undisclosed Ingredients or Content**

*The nature of the exercises and 'retraining' is not revealed until a fee is paid. No doctor would offer a surgery without revealing the full nature of the procedure to be performed, nor should a person be expected to pay for any type of treatment or therapy without knowledge of the procedure they are paying for.*

### **You Have to Keep at it to Get Results**

*The purporters of amygdala retraining say it's simple and easy and claim they themselves have been cured... instantly or within days. But you will have to keep practicing the technique to get results... often for months they claim.*

### **It Doesn't Work Because You Did It Wrong**

*After you've shelled out money and taken the workshop and don't get results, you are simply told, "You're doing it wrong." But they often can't specify anything wrong with your technique, just that you have to practice more or concentrate harder.*

### **Science Hasn't Even Bothered to Discredit It (no threat)**

*Usually when a complimentary or alternative treatment works, it is a threat to the drug industry and they actively work to produce studies to discredit it in favor of drug based approaches. MCS, CFS, and FM experiments involving amygdala retraining which results in remission cannot be found in the scientific literature.*

### **The seller lacks a medical degree or similar qualification.**

*None of the purporters of amygdala retraining cures hold medical credentials.*

### **It's Too Good to Be True**

*A simple exercise you do each morning for a short time and you're cured. You can stop the exercise once the amygdala is retrained. After spending hoards of money on testing, doctors, treatments, medications, and other methods, this seems so easy, it can't be for real.*

All ten warning signs of a medical scam are present when it comes to curing MCS, CFS, and FM with amygdala retraining.

**“All the brain retraining programs are just giant frauds designed to suck money out of the sick and desperate.”**

At its best, such a ‘retraining’ might be useful for the few people who are genuinely fearful or suffer exaggerated amounts of anxiety over their illness. It may indeed be a great technique to help address the many emotions living with a challenging chronic illness presents. For this small percentage of the chronically ill and general population, retraining may serve as a good coping technique to deal with the many emotions which arise when illness strikes.

However, claiming that amygdala retraining can prevent poisoning by a toxic agent and somehow cure toxicological damage is nothing more than a complete and total scam.

In response to amygdala retraining, a respected colleague said:

*“All the brain retraining programs are just giant frauds designed to suck money out of the sick and desperate. If you want some real answers to CFS, ask yourself why is it one of the most toxic materials (mercury) in most people’s mouths. Why do we inject it into people with vaccines? I could go on. No one wants to ask the hard questions.”*

Some people with CFS, MCS, and FM are tired of all the supplements, avoiding places, having to check everything out in advance, and don’t feel that this is a life worth living long-term.

Rather than wasting time on miracle cures, it is suggested that people who want to see a change in their lives become politically active and join in campaigns to stop toxic chemicals in everyday products.

Instead of spending hundreds of dollars on promoted cures and the 30 minutes or hour a day meditating on brain changes, donate to groups like the Environmental Working Group (EWG) and spend 20 minutes a day calling your elected representatives and the companies making toxic products and get them to stop poisoning the planet and human life. The problem of illnesses like MCS would be solved then!

No Toxic Chemicals = No Chemical Injuries = No Illness

