

Scientific Study

The Impact of a Sweet Fragrance

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Chemicals are pervasive in society. Irregardless of immediate need, pesticides are frequently used in indoor environments, while herbicides are used in outdoor settings.

Nearly all people pack some sort of fragrance on their body, whether it be perfume, remnants of an earlier hair wash with scented shampoo, body lotion, or the ‘long lasting freshness’ that comes in the form of synthetic fragrances laundered into their clothing. But is it good for us?

A growing number of people are becoming ill from the chemicals which make up these scents. Scientists say that 30.5% of the general population experience scented products on others as physically irritating.

Irritation ranges from headache and sore throat to seizures and respiratory distress. Fragrances are loaded with as many as 3,000 – 5,000 synthetic chemicals of which 80% have not been tested for human safety according to the Massachusetts Nurses Association.

It is now apparent that these chemicals have a large impact on human health. While everyone is affected to some degree, those with asthma, allergies, respiratory disease, heart disease, and multiple chemical sensitivity are at higher risk.

Researchers now realize that fragrances are negatively impacting productivity and physical functioning in a large number of people..

According to new research conducted in Denmark, “MCS (multiple chemical sensitivity) MCS may have serious implications for daily functioning” and “may severely influence different aspects of everyday life,

including lifestyle, social relations, and occupational conditions.”

Avoiding these common airborne chemicals is the only way to avoid loss of functional capacity and this implies creating chemical free homes, workplaces, schools, churches, and other public places.

Yet, fragrances so pervasive in the community. Like cigarette smoke, some people have become addicted to the effects of these drug-like compounds known to affect brain function.

A cigarette fix, a fragrance fix, and a chocolate fix have much in common biologically. All three are addictive and affect brain chemistry. The difference is that a person can choose whether to eat chocolate or smoke a cigarette. However a person cannot choose to not inhale fragrance fumes and still be present in the community at large.

As second-hand smoke is being addressed by state mandates, second-hand fragrance fumes are not far behind.

The science is there. Lourdes Salvador of MCS America says, “The question is when will the public accept the science proving the harm being done to human health in the name of vanity and do something about it?”

References

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2. Skovbjerg S, Brorson S, Rasmussen A, Johansen JD, Elberling J. Impact of self-reported multiple chemical sensitivity on everyday life: A qualitative study. *Scand J Public Health*. 2009 May 1.

