



Building Air Quality

P.O. Box 9326 The Woodlands, Texas 77387-9326
tel: 281-448-1100 fx: 281-296-2889
iaqsolutions@baq1.com
www.baq1.com

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

The diagnostic label of multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) also referred to as “chemical hypersensitivity” or “environmental illness” is being applied increasingly, although definition of the phenomenon is elusive. Multiple chemical sensitivity has become more widely known and increasingly controversial as more patients receive the label.

Persons with the label of multiple chemical sensitivity are said to suffer multi-system illness as a result of contact with, or proximity to, a spectrum of substances, including airborne agents. These may include both recognized pollutants and other pollutants ordinarily considered harmless. Some who claim its existence, believe that it may explain such chronic conditions as some forms of arthritis and hypersensitivity reactions.

Some doctors believe that multiple chemical sensitivity is a purely psychological issue. Others however, counter that the disorder can cause the kinds of problems that keep those who are affected from leading a normal life.

The current consensus is that in cases of claimed or suspected MCS, complaints should not be dismissed but rather considered. Anyone claiming a sensitivity to multiple chemicals or to unusual exposures in a standard work environment should seek medical assistance from a trained health care professional.