

Tips on Scent-Free Products

The following list of brand names can be found at London Drugs, Nature's Fare or any other health food store, Superstore, Save On Foods, Wal-Mart sometimes, and sometimes Winners. Look for "fragrance free" on the label, though some people can tolerate a very mild fragrance if it is plant based, such as "pure essential oils". The words to avoid on the label are FRAGRANCE, PARFUM or PERFUME. These are synthetic chemicals which aren't healthy for anyone and cause many problems for someone with MCS (Multiple Chemical Sensitivity).

Giovanni - makes hair care products with certified organic botanicals but check the label as some products may contain parfum.

Avalon Organics - no synthetic fragrance but a strong lavender/medicinal smell.

Desert Essence - make a wide range of personal care products; look for those that say "fragrance free" on the front as some of their products contain parfum.

Nature Clean - most of their products are fragrance-free; they also have a line of cleaning products for the home.

Prairie Naturals - check which of their products are fragrance-free; a nice line of Canadian hair care products.

Australian Organics - some botanical fragrance but it is very mild and not a problem; these products are becoming harder to find in Kamloops but available in larger cities.

Dove - makes an unscented bar soap.

Ivory – their bar soap is okay.

Aveeno makes a fragrance-free body and hand lotion, also a fragrance-free shaving cream.

Gillette – also has a fragrance free shaving cream.

Crystal rock deodorants are scent free and there are other types that are scent free as well.

If you go into a place like London Drugs, you can ask for help finding scent-free products. If you go to the U.S., you may pick up some good products there that aren't available here.

More Tips

Some of the symptoms of MCS: weakness, “hay fever” symptoms, difficulty concentrating, short-term memory loss, muscle and joint pain, tinnitus, bronchitis, disorientation, feelings of exhaustion, mood swings, dizziness, headaches, rashes, heart palpitations (even atrial fibrillation), nausea, stomach cramps, vomiting, asthma attacks (one study showed that 3/4 of asthma patients have adverse reaction to perfumes), depression, seizures, and others. Due to its effect on the central nervous system, MCS can affect any part of the body, including mental functioning and the emotions.

The odor-producing substances used in perfumed products today are not made from flowers, but from over 4,000 chemicals, many of which are toxic and many of which have never been tested. 95% of these chemicals are made from petroleum. The fragrance industry is not regulated. In an Environmental Agency Report 20 years ago, Toluene was found in every fragrance sample tested. It is a known carcinogen which also causes nervous system damage.

So-called “Air Fresheners” are also toxic to many individuals, as is smoke, most cleaning products, new carpets, glues, plastics, etc.

MCS is caused by overexposure to toxic chemicals; this is an increasingly serious health problem. Some people are more sensitive than others, and take longer for symptoms to appear, but all of us are at risk from the daily bombardment on our immune systems. The effect is cumulative.

MCS is now an officially recognized disease in at least four countries: Germany, Austria, Japan and Canada. Many other jurisdictions include it among reasons for obtaining disability status.

A recent note from Linda: Any health food store or health food aisle in the supermarkets carry shampoos, conditioners, deodorants, etc. that have a "Fragrance Free" label. Sometimes the label is easy to spot and other times it requires a bit of reading.

Scent-free dryer sheets are available at Super-Store. Home Hardware markets reusable dryer cloths and a kind of rubber or plastic ball that lasts a long time.

Ardy recommends the following which have a slight fragrance at first but which soon dissipates:

Chatters in the Aberdeen Mall sells a hair moisturizer, Biolage.

Finesse unscented hairspray can be found in London Drugs and elsewhere.

Live Clean (Green Earth) Styling Mousse.