

Safe As Houses

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CANARIES OR CASSANDRAS?

A 21st CENTURY SCANDAL

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Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is a disorder which can affect all the body systems and tissues because of its increasingly well-proven modes-of-action* at cellular and tissue level. It is most commonly triggered by a toxic overload/poisoning, which may be a single acute event (e.g. falling in the sheep dip), or a cumulative toxic load combined with depletion of the body's de-toxification system due to nutrient deficiency, malabsorption, dietary deficiencies or imbalances*. MCS was acknowledged in the UK Parliament as a physical illness by the Minister for Health in 1997. It is also recognised by USA, Australian and European governments and the World Health Organisation as a physical illness*.

The poisoning episode(s) and/or a cumulative toxic load may be derived from industrial, agricultural, household, medical or atmospheric sources and all the indications are that *combinations* of chemical exposure tend to be markedly more damaging than the predicted sum of single exposures*.

A tendency to classical immune system mediated allergies, giving childhood asthma, eczema, allergic rhinitis, hyperactivity etc. appear to be a strong predisposing factor* to the development of MCS, and such conditions are definitely aggravated, or even initiated by*, xenobiotic** poisoning*/MCS*.

MCS, also known as E.I. Syndrome (Environmental Illness Syndrome), can manifest itself as a range of end-organ diseases - (and a merry-go-round of NHS end-organ clinics which fail to make the connection for sufferers*), - and is linked with, or in some cases, synonymous with, ME/CFS, MS, Parkinson's, MND, Gulf War syndrome, arthritis, rheumatism, IBS, various heart and circulatory diseases, malabsorption syndrome and multiple allergies, including eczema, asthma etc) to name but a few symptoms/causal pictures*.

Doctors in the UK are not trained to recognise or treat either Organo Chlorine /Organo Phosphate poisoning or MCS and are not taught about orthomolecular nutrition or the chemical (including xenobiotic) detoxification pathways of the body (other than select systems in the liver) although the detox system is as vital to health and indeed, survival* as the cardio-vascular (heart), pulmonary (lung), skeletal, urinary, nervous or integumental

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(skin), at medical school. Astonishingly, there is not even a Chair of Allergy and Immunology in the UK for sufferers of classical immune system mediated allergy and only one Medical School specifically has a Department of Nutrition. In addition, two Professors of Pharmacy and Pharmacology have described to me their regret and frustration that medical students and doctors “are simply not interested in drug interactions or modes of action and the more subtle contra-indications. They might as well choose their medication by sticking pins in M.I.M.S. and make their selections according to the sales-spiel of the most generous drug reps rather than the science available”*).

The NHS offers no treatment for MCS and these untrained doctors - even if they recognise the condition - generally look to their armoury of chemical medication which requires the already overloaded detox system to metabolise it, without realising how wholly inappropriate, potentially harmful and even acutely or a cumulatively dangerous it can be to a patient with a compromised bio-cellular detox-system and immune system.

The NHS does not even use the now widely researched and sophisticated battery of biochemical and metabolic tests necessary to diagnose and monitor the condition*. Most doctors in the UK are unaware of their existence - though they are widely employed routinely in the USA, Australia and other nations.

MCS sufferers have been erroneously labelled as “Allergic to the 20th/21st Century” as a handy catch-phrase. They have also been called the “**Canaries of the 20th/21st Century**” - by those who recognise the significance of the condition - as what affects the sensitised MCS sufferer now, is predicted to affect increasing numbers of people - and like classical allergies*, be magnified through the generations, if we don't act to reduce our ‘chemical load’, improve the nutritional quality and nutrient availability of our food, (reducing its attenuation by chemical adulteration), chemical sensitivities, food and inhalational intolerances, sensitivities and allergies will clearly continue their exponential increase.*

It is my contention that MCS victims are not the ‘Canaries’; they are the ‘Cassandras’ of the 20th/21st Century. When coal miners’ canaries reacted to carbon monoxide, the miners didn't abuse them, tell them they were psychiatrically ill or refuse them proper food and shelter; they took notice and acted accordingly!

Cassandra, on the other hand, was the daughter of King Priam of Troy. She was endowed by the god Apollo with the true gift of prophesy, but because she would not let him have his ‘wicked way’ with her, he then condemned her prophesies to eternal disbelief. She correctly predicted the Wooden Horse of Troy and was ‘stoned’ by the people of Troy for her trouble.

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This “shoot the messenger” trait is much in evidence amongst the medical*, scientific* “flat earthers” as well as the vested interests* who gleefully fuel and manipulate their ill-informed and out-dated misinformation* in an attempt to discredit MCS as a diagnosis, the doctors who diagnose and treat it and, disgracefully, the often very poorly patients whose lives have been devastated by the condition.

MCS is truly a **Cassandra Syndrome** - and ironically, more than one seriously ill sufferer has had stones thrown at their homes - myself included. All the MCS sufferers I know, young or old, totally crippled or moderately functional, have had varying degrees of abuse and derision thrown at them - rather like lepers in the Dark Ages and beyond. Why? MCS isn't catching - (although family members and nurses have been made ill by the sweat of detoxing patients - by direct contact).

Clearly the authorities ignore/deride/abuse sufferers -

- a) a) to try and avoid spending money in the short term, although the cost of increasingly disabled sufferers kept ill by ignorant, culpable neglect in the long term is rising,
- b) b) because of nebulous fears that if they acknowledge the condition, somebody might sue them - although all the sufferers I know are more interested in getting treatment and controlling their illness, but are more likely to sue if pushed into a corner by the passive/aggressive neglect of those authorities,
- c) c) because some authorities (and some individuals within those authorities) are manifestly influenced, knowingly or unknowingly, by vested interests likely to be damaged by any acknowledgement of its reality and must therefore be avoided at all costs. The trouble is, the cost may be relative peanuts to the vested interests, but it is costing lives, livelihoods and lifestyle of the sufferers and their families and connections.

Why do members of the public, GPs, neighbours even fellow religious groups/church members and some family members also match this stance - like the good, but misguided, citizens of Troy, often in a shockingly aggressive or at best, dismissive and hurtful way. These same people would not dream of saying to a diabetic (who has a much more simple condition to manage) - “what you need is a big box of chocolates”, will readily say to a desperately hungry MCS sufferer miserably existing on millet or buckwheat because that's all they can keep down, - “what you need is a damn good meal”. If only!!

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Why did the people of Troy stone the very person who warned them of danger? ***Fear. Fear of the unknown, fear of the implications for them, fear of the consequences, et al. This problem is here,*** but is seen as being too big to “get their heads round” and therefore goes unacknowledged. People feel cornered and confused and in their fear and ignorance they lash out. **They blame the victims.** Sadly, they may soon join the victims, if they have not already unknowingly have done so - with their as yet “unconnected” string of end-organ diseases*.

I am one person who has been comprehensively lashed out at since I was first (organo chlorine) poisoned in 1972 and multiply organo phosphate poisoned from 1974 onwards and subsequently diagnosed with MCS in 1983, after years of desperate health problems and many mystified doctors. I am not an “isolated case”*. I am frequently told I am one of the “worst affected” sufferers living (although my *existence* can hardly be said to be called *living*).

My story, and that of the many other “allegedly” isolated cases of MCS is a salutary reminder that “there but for the Grace of God.....”. The story of those who have lashed out at me, to continue the Biblical allusion, is graphically encapsulated by “*scorners delight in their scorning and fools hate knowledge*” (Ecclesiastes 1.18).

You too could lose your career, your health, your home, your car, your treasured possessions, your lifestyle, and like some sufferers, your marriage, your children in to Care, indeed your very life - if you are struck down by MCS and consigned to the “mercy” (sic) of the British Medical Establishment and Authorities and “Care” and Housing Authorities, once you have exhausted your own financial resources - triggered because an error is made treating your office for cockroaches, or you get sprayed walking your dog past a field, or you habitually lick your golf tees on a golf course sprayed with Ops, or joyfully move into a new home which has been furnished with MDF furniture and carpets treated with toxic chemicals - just after a dose of ‘flu has compromised your immune system. One sufferer I know has been badly affected since she lay in a pool of diesel following a motor accident, until she could be cut from the wreckage. It can be that simple - it could happen to you, like other sufferers, through no fault of your own!

A recent sycophantic review of a book debunking Green Issues in a national Sunday newspaper sneeringly referred to environmentalists as “environmental Cassandras” - erroneously forgetting that the trouble with the much maligned Cassandra is - she was always right!! (I hate to tell you this....)

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The insidious and cumulative incursion of harmful, often xenobiotic chemicals in entirely unresearched and potentially chemically synergistic culminations, could be the 21st century Wooden Horse that stealthily brings artificially created “improvements” under the cloak of industry-led consumerism and advertising. This conceals a rampaging horde of trouble for those it purports to shield and benefit.

We must surely be the First Generation for whom problems, which subsequently metamorphose into “mass misplaced hygiene neuroses”, are deliberately created so that white-coated scientists, in order to further worship the God ‘Materialism’ may then sell us the solution. We are conned by industrial giants anxious to make profit out of their own waste products into killing off often harmless bugs with increasingly toxic chemicals, which in turn evolve the few harmful bugs into ever more resistant strains.

The benefits of the radical hygiene revolution led by the many great scientists of the 19th and early 20th centuries cannot be underestimated. Since then, however, a fine line has been crossed which should surely have remained inviolate. Integrity and devotion to the cessation of human suffering have been contaminated by those for whom potential profit is the entire *raison d’etre* of human existence. Bombardment of advertising from womb to grave ensures that organophobia becomes a 21st century crusade against the very earth which sustains us and which we originally evolved to live upon. Cleansed and immunised from the moment of birth, we are never given a chance to develop our own immune systems through healthy contact with a range of natural substances. (What ever happened to a “peck of dirt”?). In addition, our bodily detoxification systems are confronted and indeed overtaxed with an unprecedented plethora of man-made xenobiotic chemicals which our living systems have simply not evolved to handle.

Instead, we are coerced and brainwashed into living in sterile prisons to protect our increasingly fragile bodies until we are ultimately poisoned by the very chemicals we had been convinced were our only means of survival. We must become aware that many solutions may inevitably cause more problems.

Perhaps the most frightening aspect of this endless consumer consuming pharmacological enchanted existence is the induced collective amnesia which leads us to forget that life was never meant to be so complicated

After 4 millennia, perhaps it is time we heeded Cassandra and broke Apollo’s curse. (Ironically he was the God of Healing - after all, he basically wanted to rape her, not unlike the god-like Apollos of the multi-national chemical, food and pharmaceutical industries and their government stooges).

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Many MCS sufferers already feel as if they have been metaphorically raped by parts of the medical Establishment as well as the clinical and pharmaceutical industries, and further gang-raped by the “Care authorities” including the medical system, also the government whose duty it is to protect them.

This new millennium is the time for a new beginning, new attitudes, new perspectives and approaches and a new positive principle of humanity towards sufferers, whose condition doctors don't always comprehend - but that does not mean they should be denigrated, demeaned and disbelieved because they do not 'fit' any of the ailments for which the doctors have been trained . We pride ourselves on our kindness to animals, now it is time to be kind and take note of your Canaries before you too are poisoned and brought to your knees.

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