

May is the Month of MCS – What Does That Mean?

Raising Awareness for Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

Each May, communities around the world come together to recognize Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) Awareness Month—a time to spotlight a condition that affects millions, yet remains widely misunderstood and under-acknowledged.

But what exactly is MCS, and why does it deserve a whole month of recognition?

Understanding MCS

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is a chronic condition in which individuals experience a wide range of symptoms when exposed to chemicals commonly found in everyday environments. These chemicals might include fragrances, cleaning agents, pesticides, smoke, and building materials—products many people encounter daily without issue.

For someone with MCS, these exposures can trigger debilitating reactions: headaches, fatigue, respiratory distress, dizziness, nausea, cognitive difficulties, and more. This condition can make everyday tasks—like shopping, taking public transit, or even going to school or work—feel impossible.

Why May Matters

May serves as an opportunity to:

- Raise public awareness about what MCS is and how it affects people's lives
- Advocate for safer, scent-free, and inclusive environments
- Recognize the resilience of individuals living with MCS
- Push for policy change, better healthcare recognition, and more research



It's also a time to honour the lived experiences of those with MCS who often face skepticism, stigma, and systemic barriers to diagnosis, treatment, and accommodation.

Landmarks Light Up for MCS Awareness

One powerful and visible way communities show support during May is through lighting up landmarks in yellow and green—the official colours of MCS awareness. Across Canada, iconic buildings, towers, bridges, and city halls, such as the CN Tower and Niagara Falls, glow in yellow and green in solidarity with those living with MCS.

These illuminations are more than just symbolic—they're a public recognition of an invisible illness and a call to action for safer, fragrance-free environments. They spark conversations, encourage curiosity, and help break the silence surrounding multiple chemical sensitivity.

If your city or town is lighting up a landmark this year, consider snapping a photo and sharing it with the hashtag **#MCSAwareness** to spread the message even further.

How You Can Support MCS Awareness Month

- Go fragrance-free: Choose fragrance-free personal care and cleaning products.
- Create scent-safe spaces: Advocate for fragrance-free policies in schools, workplaces, and public spaces.
- Share stories: If you or someone you know lives with MCS, consider sharing your experience to help build empathy and understanding.
- Educate yourself and others: Learn about common chemical triggers and how to reduce environmental exposures.
- Use your platform: Post about MCS Awareness Month on social media using hashtags like **#MCSAwareness**, **#FragranceFree**, and **#MultipleChemicalSensitivity**.

Conclusion



May is more than a month of blooming flowers and fresh spring air—it's also a powerful reminder that the air we share isn't safe for everyone. Multiple Chemical Sensitivity challenges us to think differently about our environments, our choices, and our collective responsibility to create inclusive spaces.