

# GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF CHRONIC CHEMICAL INJURY, FIBROMYALGIA AND MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS

Page 1 of 4

## Chronic Chemical Injury (CCI)

The name Chronic Chemical Injury has come from a growing understanding of this condition over many years. It has been known, and is known, as the 20th Century Disease, Chemical Allergies, Environmental Sensitivity, Environmental Hypersensitivity, Environmental Illness, Chemical Sensitivity, Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), Toxin Induced Loss Of Tolerance (TILT), Chemical Intolerance and Chemical Injury. The name given often depends on the understanding of the doctor who is doing the diagnosis, and the country in which the diagnosis was given.

In Canada, the federal and provincial governments use the terms of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and/or Environmental Sensitivity (ES) in presenting it's information.

However, on this web site, we use the terms of Chronic Chemical Injury and Chemical Intolerance, as these terms help to clarify the facts that the people have been injured by their exposures to toxic chemicals, and that the reactions experienced by these individuals are toxic reactions, not allergic reactions. These toxic reactions, which developed after the person crossed their body's toxic threshold, are evidence that their body has developed an intolerance for further exposures to toxic chemicals.

Chronic Chemical Injury is exactly that. It is injury caused by exposure to toxic chemicals that leaves the person with long-lasting (chronic) symptoms. It is an acquired health condition that can occur quite suddenly or very gradually, and can vary widely in the degree of severity, similar to physical injury. Physical Injury can vary from a small cut, to fractured bones, to multi-system trauma, and everything in-between. Likewise, Chemical Injury can vary from a headache, to painful muscles and joints, to multi-system effects, and everything in-between. The person might be able to be employed or might be disabled. The disabled person might have an invisible disability (not obvious) or an obvious disability requiring a walker or a wheelchair, or might even be completely bedridden.

Chronic Chemical Injury is primarily characterized by:

### An Intolerance To Further Exposures To Toxic Chemicals

The degree of chemical intolerance depends on the degree of injury. It can range from very slight intolerance to extremely severe intolerance.

### Experiencing Toxic Reactions Upon Exposures To Toxic Chemicals

The severity of the toxic reaction will depend on the severity of the injury, and how ill the person is at the time of exposure. It can range from being very mild to being disabling to being very severe to being fatal. Please see these articles:

Toxic Reactions – The Body's Alarm System

<https://www.hrni.ca/chronic-chemical-injury-information/toxicreaction>

Dose-Response Relationship

<https://www.hrni.ca/chronic-chemical-injury-information/doseresponserelationship>

# GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF CHRONIC CHEMICAL INJURY, FIBROMYALGIA AND MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS

Page 2 of 4

Some common toxic reactions, include but are not limited to: headache, migraine, cognitive difficulties (brain fog), dizziness, impaired balance, muscle spasms, muscle weakness, muscle and joint pain, fibromyalgia, asthma, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, extreme fatigue, and myalgic encephalomyelitis.

## Multiple Systems Affected

Any one system of the body or any combination of the systems of the body or all of the systems of the body can be negatively affected. The number of body systems that can be negatively impacted completely depends upon the inherent characteristics of the toxic chemicals (poisons) to which the person has been exposed. If the toxicological information of the products are known, the toxic reactions of the person will frequently match the product's toxicological information of that product. However, the toxicological information for many products, such as perfume and household cleaning products, are not available to the public.

## Progressive In Nature

If medical intervention is unavailable or is inadequate, a person's health will progressively become worse. The person will progress from having to take off sick days from work, to becoming disabled and unable to work. The disability might be invisible (not obvious) or it might progress to becoming visible (obvious) with the person requiring a walker or a wheelchair or leaving the person bedridden. Without adequate medical intervention it can be fatal.

As it progresses, many people will have the toxic reaction of Fibromyalgia (FM) with exposures to toxic chemicals, and some may even have the toxic reaction of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) upon exposures to potent toxic chemicals.

## With Medical Intervention, Some Degree of Recovery Of Health Is Possible

The key medical intervention requirement for any degree of recovery of health for the Chronic Chemically Injured person, is to enable them to avoid further exposures to toxic chemicals. It is the key treatment because other treatments will not be effective, or will not be as effective as they could be, if this initial requirement is not met.

Avoidance of further exposures to toxic chemicals is primarily achieved by enabling them to live in a low-toxicity home. A low-toxicity home is a home in which the indoor air toxins are almost non-existent, in a locality in which the outdoor air toxins are reduced to very low levels. If the Chronic Chemically Injured person is enabled to live in a safe low-toxicity home and if other supportive medical assistance is adequately provided, then the Chronic Chemically Injured person has the opportunity for either full or partial recovery of health, depending on the degree of chemical injury the person has experienced.

# GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF CHRONIC CHEMICAL INJURY, FIBROMYALGIA AND MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS

Page 3 of 4

## Fibromyalgia (FM)

The meaning of the word “Fibromyalgia” helps in understanding what it is.

- “Fibro,” means fibrous tissues
- “My,” means muscles
- “Algia,” means pain.

Fibromyalgia is pain in the muscles and fibrous tissue of the body. This is an acquired health condition that can occur quite suddenly or very gradually.

Fibromyalgia is primarily characterized by:

- Widespread Musculoskeletal Pain
- Fatigue
- Cognitive Difficulties (Brain Fog)

For people who are Chronic Chemically Injured, fibromyalgia is considered a toxic reaction that they might experience upon exposure to toxic chemicals.

## Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME)

In North America, Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) is regularly called Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS). In Europe and some other countries, it is called by the more accurate name of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis. Once again, the name given often depends on the understanding of the doctor who is doing the diagnosis.

However, the name Chronic Fatigue Syndrome tends to minimize the seriousness of this health condition. It is so much more than just fatigue. The cognitive ability is negatively impacted (severe brain fog); there can be dizziness upon movement, digestive problems and so much more. The body feels like lead and the effort it takes for movement is exhausting. One can sleep deeply for 12 to 18 hours and wake up feeling unrefreshed and like one still hasn't even gone to bed yet. The person sometimes becomes completely bed ridden. This is an acquired health condition that can occur quite suddenly or very gradually.

On this web site, we use the term of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME), as this term helps to clarify the fact that the people have a wide array of debilitating symptoms. It is so much more than just being extremely fatigued all the time.

The meaning of the words “Myalgic Encephalomyelitis” helps in understanding what it is.

- Myalgic refers to muscle pain and/or muscle tenderness.
- Encephalomyelitis refers to inflammation of the brain and spinal cord.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF CHRONIC CHEMICAL INJURY, FIBROMYALGIA AND MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS

Page 4 of 4

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis is primarily characterized by:

- Post-Exertion Malaise (worsening of symptoms upon even minimal exertion)
- Multiple Systems Affected
- Unrefreshed Sleep – Often sleeping 14 hours or more and feeling like you haven't gone to bed yet.
- Profound Fatigue – Sometimes leaving the person completely bedridden
- Cognitive Difficulties (Brain Fog)
- Pain

For people who are Chronic Chemically Injured, myalgic encephalomyelitis is a toxic reaction that they might experience upon exposure to potent toxic chemicals.