

AWARE NEWS



Spring 1996

Services for Independent Living, Inc.

TIPS FROM TONI TEMPLE ON MCS

The following is an excerpt taken from the pamphlet Healthier Hospitals, developed by Toni Temple and Ohio Network for the Chemically Injured. This pamphlet will be used to educate hospital administration and staff concerning the needs of those with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) disability.

In addition, MCS facilitates a support group once a month for those who are interested in learning how chemicals in the environment affect health. Meetings are held at the Royal Redeemer Lutheran Church (old church auditorium, park in rear), 11680 Royalton Road (Rt. 82), North Royalton

For further information and future meeting dates call Ohio, Network for the Chemically Injured, (440) 845-1888

DIETARY

Patient's with MCS will have differing food sensitivities and allergies, however, certain guidelines can be followed to form the basics for an MCS diet which are comparable to other diets such as the diabetic and low-fat diets. It is recommended that hospitals routinely provide the MCS diet as an option to children, the elderly, patients with cancer and asthma, individuals with severe digestive and stomach disorders and others persons in high risk groups who will benefit from reduction of dietary stress in their diets.

Guidelines

- No processed foods of any kind including instant oatmeal, mixes used to prepare hospital food, such as "instant mashed potatoes", etc.
- No dyes, preservatives, artificial flavorings or MSG
- Do not use aerosol cooking sprays of any kind (substitute lethicin which can be obtained at health food stores)
- No artificial sweeteners (includes aspartame, nutrasweet, etc.)
- Use chlorine-free or distilled water or permit patient to bring their own "tolerated" water for drinking

- Lactose intolerance is a common problem of those with MCS and lactose free milk could be substituted (or patient may bring their own tolerated milk products)

Physician's orders to be closely followed for special dietary needs and/or restrictions. For example, many patients may have additional allergies to products not listed above (peanuts, soy, dairy, etc.) and therefore all foods containing these items must be avoided completely. When in doubt, communicate with patient and patient's physician.

On physician's request, permit patient (or their families) to bring their own tolerated food products (to include organic fruits and vegetables, breads, beverages, snacks, etc. and provide a place to refrigerate them. Quantity stored at any given time should be based on length of hospital stay and within reason.

Use only glass and ceramic for eating utensils, cups and glasses (care should be taken to properly rinse all dishes and glassware to ensure that there is no soap or chemical residue remaining). Plastics and styrofoam can be problematic for those with MCS, especially when hot liquids or foods are served in them and in general, should not be used for those with MCS.

Retain patient's dietary requirements in a permanent file for future reference and hospital visits as the compilation of this data is time consuming. This will also ensure accuracy and prevent human error due to oversight or forgetfulness. □

AWARENEWS IN ACCESSIBLE FORMAT

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