

Orig: Unlisted system (114/15)
To: Chris Brown
Subject: RE: environmental sensitivities

Msg #80, 12-Feb-91 11:03

From: asuvax.eas.asu.edu!CMUVM.BITNET!34AEJ7D
To: Chris Brown <Chris.Brown@f113.n163.z1.fidonet.org>
Date: Tue, 12 Feb 91 10:20:27 EST

After seeing your posting in L-HCAP, I thought you might like to hear from someone in "the States" who has "environmental sensitivities". I work in a computer outfit located in a basement. That's right, a damn basement! I am also disabled, but that isn't really what this note is about.

I NEVER had allergies or environmental sensitivities until exposure to the mold, pollutants, paint and solvent vapors (they LOVE to paint during normal working hours to save OT for the paint crew), sewer gas, copier chemicals, formaldehyde from carpeting etc., car exhaust (the air intake for the building is at the loading dock where the trucks park), cigarette smoke, and on and on. The building is one of those sealed miracles where everyone breathes everyone else's stale breath, or worse. The ventilation is so bad that the odors from the loo aren't carried away, but simply spread throughout the place. There is also a great deal of "white" noise.

Several of us, over the past few years, started having symptoms such as headaches, backaches, dizziness, visual and digestive upsets, sinus problems, depression, excessive fatigue, food allergies, etc. We did some research with the aid of an RN (now retired) who helped on condition that her involvement be kept secret due to fear of retaliation. We found that ALL of the symptoms we were experiencing could be caused by environmental sensitivities. It took us nearly a year of concerted effort to get a "solution". What was that? The company provided desk top "air purifier" for the office of each person who had complained. Big deal. NOTHING else was done.

OK, so much for background. Of course all this led to a good bit of doctoring. I learned rather quickly that the default attitude of the average American GP toward environmental sensitivities is as follows:

sinus problems	"You have a touch of flu."
digestive problems	"Too much coffee."
headache	"Nerves. It's all in your mind."
More [Y,n]?	
low back pain	"Nerves. It's all in your mind."
visual disturbance	"Nerves. It's all in your mind."
excessive fatigue	"It's all in your mind."
depression	"It's all in your mind. You probably need counseling. How is your sex life?"
food allergies	"Nerves. Too much coffee."

Does that answer your question, sort of?

W. K. (Bill) Gorman