

PREFACE

The importance of chemicals in our environment as a cause of sickness was demonstrated about 50 years ago. Dr. Theron G. Randolph, pioneer in this field, has shown extensively a cause and effect relationship between external environment and ill health. Since then, many other physicians have confirmed these findings in thousands of well documented cases. *Human Ecology and Susceptibility to the Chemical Environment* was the first book on this subject, printed in 1962. In this book, Dr. Randolph has described in detail the major environmental pollutants in respect to their clinical implications, methods of diagnosis, and how to avoid such exposures. In the last decade, any books have been written on this subject. Many of these books are excellent and full of valuable information necessary for successful management of an ecologically ill patient. For detailed reference, these books should be consulted. A reference list is provided at the end of this book.

Many patients, when first diagnosed as chemically susceptible, feel overwhelmed. When they are presented with the wealth of information in the form of various books, the problem gets compounded. Often their response is common, "Doctor, where do I start and what do I do next? To what extent do I need to avoid various chemicals and what changed do I need to make in my home and other environments right now? how do I do all this? chemicals are all over." A few facts need appreciation.

First of all, no two chemically sensitive patients are alike. They vary greatly, at least in their immediate need to avoid various exposures. Secondly, patients differ greatly in their exposures to various chemicals, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Thirdly, they are susceptible to them to varying degrees. Thus, the urgency and degree of avoidance for each of such exposures is different. Finally, the patient's capacity or resources to bring about these changes are also very variable. Therefore, it becomes mandatory to custom design a treatment program to fit the needs of the patient for it to be successful.

The purpose of this book is precisely that. This book will make the initial doctor-patient counseling easy, systematic, and time-saving. This book is by no means a substitute for total care and counseling that a patient with severe ecologic illness needs. This will help them get started. The aim of this book has been to provide the patient with very basic information about the major chemical troublemakers in regard to their sources, methods of testing, how to avoid them, and the substitutions. an utmost effort is made to keep the matter simple, precise, and as practical as possible. Any practical suggestions and/or criticisms are welcome.

I am very grateful to Dr. Theron G. Randolph, Natalie Golos, Dr. Marshall Mandell, Dr. William Rea, and Beatrice Trum Hunger, whose pioneer work has made it possible for me to write this book.

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