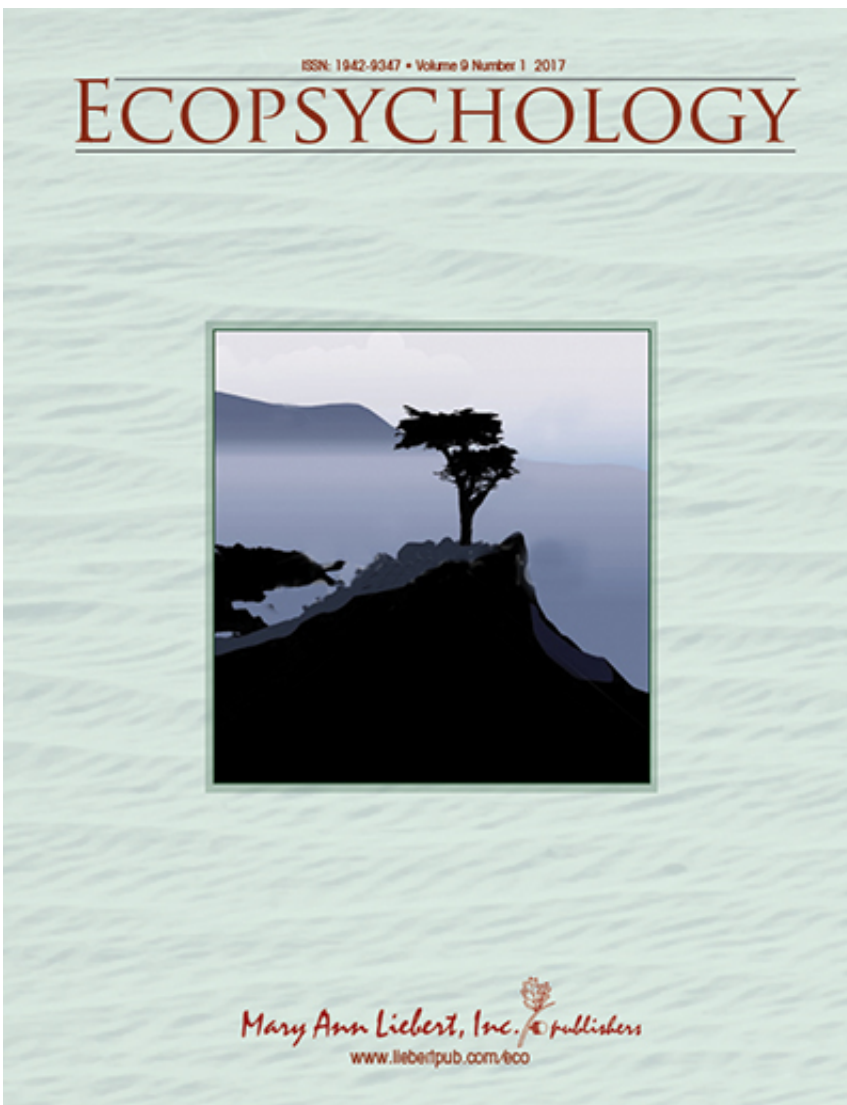


# Recognition and mechanisms of chemical and environmental sensitivities in ecopsychology

July 5 2017

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A comprehensive look at the under-recognized problem of environmental sensitivity and related disorders that develop as a result of exposure to chemicals and other toxic factors is published in a special issue of Ecopsychology entitled "Ecopsychology and Environmental Sensitivities: Chemical, Electrical, and Beyond,".

William Meggs, MD, PhD, Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, Greenville, NC, contributed two articles to the special issue. In the article entitled "The Role of Neurogenic Inflammation in Chemical Sensitivity," he reviews the scientific evidence showing that environmental chemicals can trigger nerve fibers to release inflammation-inducing signals, leading to chemical [sensitivity](#) in some people. This may cause or worsen diseases of the respiratory and gastrointestinal tracts, skin, and musculoskeletal and nervous systems.

In ["History of the Rise and Fall of Environmental Medicine in the United States,"](#) Dr. Meggs provides a comprehensive overview of how sensitivity to chemicals such as pesticides, preservatives, and inhalants was first discovered. Despite the potential for [chemical](#) sensitivity to contribute to increasingly common diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and depression, Dr. Meggs states that commercial interests and corporate profits have suppressed the growth of the environmental medicine field.

Alison Johnson, founder and chair of the Chemical Sensitivity Foundation, writes about ["The Many Faces of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity"](#) (MCS) and the terrible effects of this poorly understood and insufficiently researched condition. She provides multiple examples of people who have great difficulty finding places they can live or work due to MCS developed as a result of past exposures, such as veterans suffering from Gulf War syndrome, First Responders exposed to toxins at Ground Zero in New York City, and workers who have become sensitive to pesticides, petroleum products, and other chemicals and toxins.

"With Pam Gibson, PhD, from James Madison University as Guest Editor, this issue of *Ecopsychology* makes a bold move forward on this controversial and important topic," says Editor-in-Chief Peter H. Kahn, Jr., PhD, Professor, Department of Psychology and School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

**More information:** William J. Meggs, The Role of Neurogenic Inflammation in Chemical Sensitivity, *Ecopsychology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1089/eco.2016.0045](https://doi.org/10.1089/eco.2016.0045)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

Citation: Recognition and mechanisms of chemical and environmental sensitivities in ecopsychology (2017, July 5) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-07-recognition-mechanisms-chemical-environmental-sensitivities.html>

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