

So You Think You Might Be Electrosensitive

Level 1 Intervention: Education

1. **Educate yourself about electromagnetic (EM) hypersensitivity:** Self-education is the foundation upon which all else will follow. A good starting point is to begin to understand the difference between electric fields, magnetic fields and radiofrequency waves. Each person with EM sensitivity will be effected differently by each of these three components of the EM spectrum. Several of the websites listed below, including Lloyd Burrell's, will review this in more detail. Later intervention levels will depend on a deepening exploration of how you are effected by each of these three EMF forms.
2. **Information from the internet and/or books:**
 - a. Visit Lloyd Burrell's website, www.electricsense.com, and Michael Neuert's www.emfcenter.com. Lots of material to be downloaded from these two sites. (Burrell's offers an overview of how to make your home safe, your office safe, Smart meters, etc, much of which is summarized in my companion handout mentioned below in the "Level 2 Intervention: Harm Reduction" section).
 - b. I can also highly recommend Lloyd Burrell's book, "Beating Electrosensitivity: The Path to Tread" – downloadable from his website listed above. The book is a little "edgy" in places, suggesting some alternative practices that I wouldn't recommend, so use your own skepticism to sift through the material. That said, he advocates an integrated, multi-focal approach that I think is great.
 - c. Other websites to check (both for their information and to follow links to other sites):
 - www.emfsafetynetwork.org – a Sonoma County based advocacy group with links to other sites.
 - www.electromagneticman.co.uk – a U.K. website with a range of information, including great videos of people with EM hypersensitivity.
 - www.weepinitiative.org – a Canadian website, again with lots of information, including the downloadable pamphlet "Living with Electrohypersensitivity: A Survival Guide."
 - d. If you want to go into greater detail:
 - i. "The Force: Living Safely in a World of Electromagnetic Pollution" by Lyn McLean – This book offers a readable yet comprehensive review of the biology, medicine and politics of the issue. Take special note of chapters 9, 10 and 11: "Electromagnetic Hypersensitivity," "The Controversy," and "Reducing Exposure to Electromagnetic Radiation."
 - e. If you really want to go into greater detail:
 - i. Bioinitiative: A Rationale for Biologically-based Exposure Standards for Low-Intensity Electromagnetic Radiation – A committee of international experts produced this nearly 1500 page report that reviews the public health issues of EM radiation in great detail. "Summary for the Public" (pages 61-100) offers a digestible summary. The report is available in its entirety at <http://www.bioinitiative.org>

Level 2 Intervention: Harm Reduction

1. **Review the companion handout, "The Risks of Radiofrequency (RF) Technology – A Brief Review."** Consider implementing any and all changes described to minimize your degree of RF exposure. Guidelines there are basic and applicable to all people, but also represent a first line of interventions for someone with electrosensitivity.

Level 3 Intervention: Self-assessment

1. **Start a journal:** Only you will be able to properly diagnose which exposures cause you to be symptomatic. Here's an example of headings for a daily journal that you might keep:

Date Exposures Symptoms Mood of the Day Sleep Morning well-being Insights

The idea is to track exposures and symptoms over each 24-hour period, from morning to morning. Insomnia and morning well-being are often a by-product of exposures from the day before, which is why "Sleep" and "Morning well-being" are part of the entry from the day before. For this to have much benefit, you need to do it regularly—ideally every day or even twice a day, morning and evening. Pay special attention to the "Insights" that come from each day. Over time, you may become increasingly clear about what is causing you trouble and what might alleviate it.

2. **Consider a trial vacation away from all things electromagnetic:** The value here is to see what happens to your health when you are clear of any EMF exposure. This can be hugely difficult to orchestrate, however, as EMFs are so ubiquitous. If you are capable and willing, a time of backcountry camping (ideally with meter in hand) can be quite revealing. Be aware of the EMF exposures you will have on the way to the camping trip and back (cell phone towers are stationed along all major highways), and monitor their impact on your well-being. Try to allow a week in the backcountry, if possible, to allow adequate recovery. Also pay special attention to how you feel the first few days after you are back in your home and moving through your daily life.

Level 4 Intervention: Environmental assessment

1. **Measure the electromagnetic fields in your environment:** Three ways to go about this: buy your own meters, rent them, or hire a consultant. See Lloyd Burrell's www.electrosense.com and Michael Neuert's www.emfcenter.com for recommendations about meters that you might purchase; Michael also rents meters.

I have found the Cornet ED75 (or Cornet ED78S) to be hugely helpful—especially for radiofrequency measurements, though it also measures magnetic fields. A body voltage meter is most helpful for determining electric fields (read about body voltage meters at www.emfcenter.com). The Cornet line of meters cost \$100-200 and body voltage meters will run under \$100 (sometimes even under \$50, as with the Gardner-Bender GDT-3200). If you are truly sensitive, these will likely be well worth their costs.

2. **Consider hiring a consultant to help with this assessment:** Doing your own EMF measuring may feel too daunting. If so, I can highly recommend Michael Neuert as a consultant. Michael is Sonoma County-based, though he does a lot of phone consultations and occasionally travels out of the area. If he's close enough to you, he can do a 2-3 hour visit, with meters in hand, that will greatly define what kind of EM fields are in your house. You may benefit enough from this one-time evaluation, or this may be only the beginning of his consultative help, as he can also help with shielding projects.

Level 5 Intervention: Shielding

1. **If you clearly are electro-sensitive, consider shielding projects to minimize your exposure:** There are many variables to consider here, far beyond the scope of this brief outline. Here's an overview of what might be done:
 - a. Radiofrequency exposure can be reduced by shielding with paint, curtains and other material.
 - b. Electric issues may benefit from shielding and/or rewiring of your house.
 - c. Magnetic fields are less amenable to shielding; the simplest approach is knowing where the highest fields are in your house (e.g. the refrigerator and oven) and minimizing time spent in those areas.

Best not to pursue this sort of approach until you've got a clear handle on Levels 1-4. It's so important first to map out the EMFs in your home or office, and then to know really well which exposures are truly causing you problems.

2. **The do-it-yourself approach:** The website www.lessemf.com is an EMF superstore where you can order materials for a wide array of projects. The people at LessEMF can also help with basic questions about your project, but only in a limited way.

3. The consultant approach: A consultant can either do the project for you, or help ensure that your DIY approach doesn't go awry. Given the potential complexity of interventions, consider at least getting consultant input before you proceed on your own. Again, I can highly recommend Michael Neuert for EMF consultation.