

## 3 easy steps

to prepare for attending our clinic

### 1. Do not use perfume/cologne or any scented toiletries.

On the day you are to visit the clinic, be sure not to use scented soap, standard hair products, skin lotions or any other perfumed toiletries. Also, be sure not to wear clothes, such as a jumper or scarf, which may still have traces of perfume. Fragranced cosmetics, such as lip balm, should be avoided.

### 2. Wash and dry your clothes in unscented laundry products.

In general, if something has a smell, it is emitting a chemical. Laundry detergent, fabric softener and anti-static dryer sheets are usually all scented products, which can adversely affect you and other patients. As an alternative, many "for sensitive skin" or scent-free non-biological laundry powders have low perfume levels or none. (Note: sometimes it can take several washes to significantly reduce the perfumes from clothes that have been cared for with scented products.) Some sensitive people simply use boric acid in their washing machine to effectively clean the clothes and be scent-free. Anti-static balls in the dryer (which are unscented) will help reduce static and wrinkles without adding any smell. Dry-cleaned clothes can also emit fragrance, so please thoroughly air any dry-cleaned clothes, such as jumpers and coats, by hanging them unwrapped in a well-ventilated area for an extended period before bringing them into the clinic, or, if possible, leave them in your car.

### 3. Eliminate air fresheners from your environment.

The perfume from air fresheners, particularly ones that spray into the air, can adhere to any number of things and leave a detectable scent. Despite your taking all other scent-free steps, a new car air-freshener could leave a strong smell on your clothing, a handbag or footwear, as well as on hair and skin, which may affect you and other patients in the clinic. Candles, potpourris and burning incense in the home may also leave a scent on clothes and furniture, which could trigger a reaction.

## Guide to becoming scent-free



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# Introduction

Breakspeare Medical Group asks all patients and visitors not to wear anything perfumed/scented when attending the clinic.

We strive to keep the allergy testing clinic as scent-free as possible. The use of scented products is not permitted within the building at any time, including materials used for cleaning. All staff have received orientation and training on how to comply with our scent-free policy.

## Breakspeare Medical Group is a scent-free environment

The reason for the restriction on scents is that there are many perfume/scent/fragrance- and chemically-sensitised patients attending the clinic who may react to just a small amount of a wide variety of smells. If they are reacting to something in the air, this may affect their allergy test results and, for some, it may cause a reaction which leads to a runny nose, breathing problems, headache or nausea. Potentially, one strong scent could adversely affect the allergy testing results of a room full of patients.

Even without using a spray of perfume or cologne, many people are unknowingly filling the air with scents that may cause an adverse reaction in a sensitive person.

Becoming scent-free is particularly important when undergoing allergy testing and treatment at Breakspeare Medical Group.



### Organic and scent-free products available at Breakspeare Pharmacy

Breakspeare Pharmacy offers patients discounted prices on a wide range of organic and scent-free personal hygiene products and household cleaning products. Talk to one of our staff members about products available or register to shop online: [www.breakspearmedical.com/shop](http://www.breakspearmedical.com/shop)



# Living scent-free

It is a current cultural phenomenon that so many things are scented and most people feel that a smell like a mountain meadow means that it is clean, fresh and desirable. Not many people give thought to what it is that is creating the enticing artificial smell; the smell is in fact volatile organic compounds (VOCs) being inhaled as vapours and absorbed through the skin.

As Breakspeare Medical Group is a medical facility specialising in allergy and environmental medicine, new reports and studies that focus on these areas of concern are frequently reviewed by our doctors and collected for reference in our medical library.

More and more studies are being published, which link more frequently occurring conditions, such as non-specific headaches, asthma, eczema, dermatitis, psoriasis, multiple chemical sensitivities, chronic fatigue and numerous other conditions, to fragrances.

Breakspeare Medical Group recommends that all our patients live a low- or no-scent lifestyle.

*“Fragrance in the workplace is the new second hand smoke.”*

Cities across North America are banning artificial fragrances in public places, as evidence is growing that the smells are making people unwell.

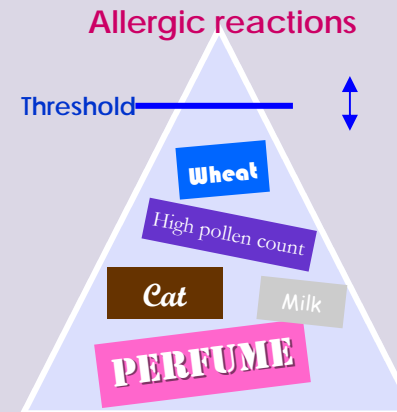
In 2010, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a Federal Agency under the Department of Health & Human Services, issued a fragrance-free policy, as part of its “Indoor Environmental Quality Policy”, to all its offices nationwide.

In Canada, people who suffer from environmental sensitivities are entitled to protection under the Canadian Human Rights Act. This means employers and service providers must provide suitable accommodation for persons with environmental sensitivities. This may include: developing and enforcing fragrance-free and chemical avoidance policies, minimising chemical use and purchasing less toxic products, and notifying employees and clients in advance of construction, re-modelling and cleaning activities.

## Reduce the Load Phenomenon

In order to help the body heal, it is important to reduce the load on the body's immune system. Think of the body as having to reach a threshold above which symptoms occur. This threshold is not fixed and can be lowered by stress, infection and general factors such as lack of sleep. To reach the threshold, the effects are cumulative as the body interacts with environmental agents. Once the threshold is reached, symptoms will be produced and this is what we call *The Load Phenomenon*.

“Loads” include things like indoor and outdoor air pollution, impure water and food. If a person is sensitive to certain foods and chemicals in the environment, the threshold is swiftly reached and symptoms produced. However, if a person



has few stresses, plenty of exercise, ample sleep and no infection, despite their encountering items to which they are sensitive, their threshold may not be reached.

Perfume/scent/fragrance can be burdening the body of both the person wearing it and the surrounding people.

Controlling environmental illness can be a challenge requiring patience and persistence. The goal is to buy the body time to heal by avoiding chronic and acute reaction.

Becoming scent-free is an easy step to help with treatment of environmental illness.

For more information, visit [www.breakspearmedical.com](http://www.breakspearmedical.com) or speak to a member of staff.