Is cellular phone radiation harmful? [1]

Hello Alice,

I regularly use a mobile phone. I read that there is a possibility that you can get cancer, because of the "radiation" of a mobile phone.

Is this true?

Greetings from The Netherlands

Answer

Dear Greetings from The Netherlands,

Given that there are approximately 5 billion cell phone users worldwide, this is a very important question! Several major studies done in the past have shown no consistent relationship between cell phone use and cancers of the brain, nerves, and head/neck area. However, cell phone technology and the use of cell phones have been changing so rapidly that more research is always needed.

Keep in mind that modern cell phones operate at a different frequency level and at a lower power level than previous phones. Additionally, modern cell phone usage has changed dramatically with the focus shifting away from making calls to texting and using Internet applications. To date, no real studies have been done on texting and app usage and their effects on cancer risk.

Cell phones emit radiofrequency energy, a form of non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation that can be absorbed by tissues near the phone when the phone is operating. The amount of radiofrequency energy that a user is exposed to depends on the technology of the phone, the distance between the phone’s antenna and the user, the extent and type of use, and the user’s distance from cell phone towers. However, to date there is no evidence from studies of cells, animals, or humans that radiofrequency energy can cause cancer. The other type of radiation – ionizing radiation – is much more powerful. It is able to damage the DNA in your cells, which can potentially cause cancer.

While cell phones radiation cannot damage your DNA, cell phone use can cause tissues near the cell phone to heat up from the radiofrequency energy (similar to a microwave). It has also been shown that extended use of a cell phone caused brain tissues on the same side as the phone’s antenna to metabolize more glucose than tissues on the opposite side. The heating
from the cell phone has also been demonstrated to increase blood flow to the brain. However, the effects of these observed effects are still unknown.

So, if you have minutes available on your calling plan, you can ring your friends and family with the news. If you are still concerned, limiting the time you spend on your cell, opting for a plugged-in phone whenever possible, and using an ear piece/headset or speakerphone instead will help limit your exposure to radiofrequency energy. In all, experts recommend limiting daily cell phone usage to less than 30 minutes a day. For more information, you may want to check out the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Center for Devices and Radiological Health [2] web site. Information is calling!

Alice!
Category:
General Health [3]
Cancer [4]

Related questions
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Dental x-ray dangers? [7]

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