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Cell phones and cancer

The amount of time people spend on cell phones has increased dramatically. Research continues to investigate whether there is a relationship between long-term cell phone use and slow-growing tumors in the brain or other parts of the body.

Information

At this time it is not clear if there is a link between cell phone use and cancer. Studies that have been conducted have not reached consistent conclusions. More long-term research is needed.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT CELL PHONE USE

Cell phones use low levels of radiofrequency (RF) energy. It is not known whether RF from cell phones causes health problems, because the studies done so far have not been in agreement.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have developed guidelines that limit the amount of RF energy cell phones are allowed to give off.

The RF exposure from cell phones is measured in specific absorption rate (SAR). The SAR measures the amount of energy absorbed by the body. The SAR permitted in the United States is 1.6 watts per kilogram (W/kg).

According to the FCC, this amount is much lower than the level shown to cause any changes in lab animals. Every cell phone manufacturer is required to report the RF exposure of each of its phone models to the FCC.

CHILDREN AND CELL PHONES

At this time, the effects of cell phone use on children are not clear. However, scientists do know that children absorb more RF than adults. For this reason, some agencies and government organizations recommend that children should avoid prolonged use of cell phones.

REDUCING RISKS

Although health problems related to long-term cell phone use are unknown, you can take steps to limit your potential risk:

- Keep calls short when using your cell phone.
- Use an earpiece or the speaker mode when making calls.

- When not using your cell phone, keep it away from your body, such as in your purse, briefcase, or backpack. Even when a cell phone is not in use, but is still turned on, it continues to give off radiation.

Alternative Names

Cancer and cell phones; Do cell phones cause cancer?

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