

Live Right Live Well

Health Food Fitness Expert QA



Are Cell Phones Safe?

By Kim Schworm Acosta

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It seems you can't go anywhere anymore without seeing -- or hearing -- someone talking on a cell phone. About two-thirds of Americans own a mobile phone -- that's 233 million of us, up from just 5 million in 1990. But aside from the occasional

nuisance of being subjected to one end of a personal conversation in the supermarket, are there any real problems associated with the skyrocketing growth of cell phones?

A growing number of scientists say yes. Because the technology is relatively new, there are very few studies examining the health effects of cell phone usage for 10 years or more, points out Dr. Ronald B. Herberman, director of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI). However, preliminary research suggests a possible link between the low levels of electromagnetic radiation that cell phones emit and dangerous biological effects, such as an increased risk of cancer. As a result, the UPCI has issued a list of 10 precautions regarding cell phone use, developed by an international expert committee of more than 20 scientists and physicians.

1. Don't allow children or teenagers to use a cell phone unless it's an emergency. The developing organs of a child are the most likely to be affected by exposure to electromagnetic fields. Young children, who have smaller brains and softer brain tissue, are the most susceptible.
2. Whenever possible, use the speakerphone mode, a headset attachment or a wireless Bluetooth headset, which has less than 1/100th of the electromagnetic emission of a normal cell phone.
3. Avoid using your cell phone in crowded public places, like a bus, where you can passively expose others to your phone's electromagnetic fields.
4. Try not to carry your cell phone on your body all the time, and avoid keeping it near you (like on your nightstand or under your pillow) while you sleep.
5. When carrying your cell phone, make sure that the back of the phone is positioned away from you, with the keypad toward your body. This way, electromagnetic fields will move away from you rather than through you.
6. Keep cell phone conversations short, since the biological effects are directly

Reader Tips

I think of my dinner plate like a pie chart and try to make half of it veggies, one-fourth protein such as chicken or fish, and one-fourth carbohydrates such as rice or pasta.

Ron Miller
 Middletown, CT

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"I Did It!"



Have you recently improved the quality of your life -- or the life of a

related to the duration of exposure. For longer conversations, use a landline with a corded phone -- not a cordless phone, which uses electromagnetic-emitting technology similar to that of cell phones.

7. Switch sides regularly while communicating on your cell phone to spread out your exposure.

8. Avoid using your cell phone when the signal is weak or when moving at high speed, such as in a car or train. In these situations the phone's power automatically increases to a maximum because it must make repeated attempts to connect to a relay antenna.

9. When possible, communicate via text messaging rather than making a voice call.

10. Choose a device with the lowest SAR possible. SAR stands for Specific Absorption Rate and indicates the strength of the magnetic field absorbed by the body. You can find out the SAR rating of different phones by searching "SAR ratings cell phones" on the Internet.

Finally, don't freak out. Of the more than 20 experts who developed these recommendations, none have stopped or intends to stop using cell phones, according to Dr. Herberman. "We do not need to ban this technology," he says, "but to adapt it, to harness it, so that it never becomes a major cause of illness."

Kim Schworm Acosta is the former health editor of *Shape* magazine and the health director of VIV. She has also written for Family Circle, Brides, Living Fit and Looking Good Now.

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Cell phones

Dr. Carlo has done extensive research on the hazards of cell phones and wireless technology. I was having health problems and found out I was being affected. I was able to regain my health by following Dr. Carlo's suggestions, with the help of a center in Oak Park, Illinois called Pure Reign. Their center is a prototype of centers that will be under his direction. They just put up a web site, but not all of the info is on there. I suggest calling them.

Posted by Karen on 6/22/09 at 1:29 PM

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Recipe



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Quiz

If you get a muscle cramp while working out, it may be due to ...

- Dehydration
- Exercising too much
- Diabetes
- Any of the above

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Poll

How often does heartburn keep you up at night?

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Once or twice a month
- Never

Your Name

Subject

Message

NEVER
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