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Cell Phones & Children – Hazardous Mix?

By sarena1964

I don't want to scare the bejeebers out of everyone with children who use cell phones, but there are some irrefutable facts. Until children go through puberty (approximate age 16), they are still forming the thickness of the skull's protective barrier and this raises some alarming concern. Additionally, the brain development continues until approximately 25 years old, so their developing nervous system is likely to be more vulnerable than ours. Between 20-80% of the cell phone's Radio Frequency (RF) waves are absorbed into the user's head, it depends on how close the user is to the antenna. The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) measured the Electro Magnetic Field (EMF) waves for various household appliances. EMF is a poison we cannot see or smell, and many neighborhoods are exposed to this danger as cell phone towers emit up to 2.5 miles away. Even at several miles away, the radiation emitted from these towers can cause DNA damage, cancer, suppressed immune function, miscarriage, depression, neurological and issues. An example, the electronic alarm clock at the head of your bed may expose you to a magnetic field (mG) of 15mG for 7 or 8 hours each night; microwave ovens emit 300mG @ 6 inches away, 30mG @ 2 feet, and 20 @ 4 feet; can opener 6 inches away is 1500mG, 30 mG @ 2 feet, and 4 mG @ 4 feet. NIEHS stated research has indicated that even weak and short exposures have an effect, and the effects seem to be cumulative and multiple on/

off exposures may induce stronger effects than continuous exposure. The Kaiser Foundation Research Institute in Oakland, California concluded women in their first 10 weeks of pregnancy exposed to peak EMF levels greater than 14 mG, such as from vacuum cleaners, hair dryers, blender and can openers, were nearly twice as likely to have miscarriages than women who had not been exposed to such strong fields.

I wonder if we are really committed to eradicating cancer? There are numerous studies reflecting ghastly results that should stop us in our tracks. But the truth is, some of the research statistics are slow in coming to light and the media clearly doesn't seem to think this is a big deal. Some studies to date: in the UK, Sir William Stewart of the National Radiological Protection Board & Health Protection Agency advised children under the age of 8 not be allowed to use cell phones. The Adelaide Hospital Research study took 200 mice, 100 were exposed to GSM-type pulsed microwaves at power density equal to a cell phone, and transmitted for 2½ hours per day. The group exposed to RF waves at 9 months found increased tumor rates and by 18 months the exposed mice were 2.4 times the tumor rate, as well as increased lymphomas. Lai-Singh and other studies show genetic (DNA) alternations in cells following reasonably low level exposures to cell phone radiation. Why are we hosing down the significance of these reports. We, you, should be demanding a series of follow-up studies to investigate our specific absorption rate ("SAR") values. Cell phone companies have reflect their levels and can be found at www.sarvalues.com. As consumers, we need to demand those companies start listing and revealing the exposure level on the packaging. A start would be to write to your State Representative or Senator demanding they put pressure to have a bill passed.

In 1993, Motorola hired Dr. George Carlo, a leading epidemiologist. Motorola was determined to prove that cell phones are "safe". After six years of research, Dr. Carlo became alarmed, when his sponsors attempted to alter and suppress his findings. At that point, Dr. Carlo became a whistleblower. He and Martin Schram tell the story

in Cell Phones: Invisible Hazards in the Wireless Age:

Dr. Carlo's research showed alarming signs: "that cell phones interfere with pacemakers, that developing skulls of children are penetrated deeply by the energy emitted from a cell phone, that the blood brain barrier which prevents invasion of the brain from toxins can be compromised by the cell phone radiation and, most startling, that radio frequency radiation creates micronuclei in human blood cells, a type of genetic damage known to be a diagnostic marker for cancer."

Surprisingly American's have not, or are ignoring safety advice. Albeit this information is still coveted by the cell phone industry for fear of losing teenagers, one of their main markets. It's mystifying that parents are not heeding the warnings, and opt to take the approach 'Ostrich – head in the sand'. Understandably working parents want to have a lifeline to their children and cell phones offer immediate contact and assurances. While schools find them disruptive as teenagers spend hours on the phone not knowing etiquette of when to use them. This in part, is the fault of the parents, who are poor role models, making dubious judgment choices. The Stewart Report recommended that children text message rather than use the phone, this way the antennae is further away for the head. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) concluded there was no proof that cell phones are risk free. However, the Journal of Cellular Biochemistry states that these frequencies cause cancer and other ailments that interfere with cellular DNA. After reading several scientific reports and articles published both here and in Great Britain, I conclude the longer one is exposed to RF waves, the better chance one has becoming ill. History will dictate that tobacco, asbestos and lead over decades of prolonged exposure had terminal results and only through lawsuits, where people were able to prove the companies knew, but chose not to fully explore the latent results.

There are so many questions that need to be answered. As a commuter, I constantly observe

people who talk on the cell phone and wonder what the potential is for the passive victims around that person talking all the time on their cell phone? Are the by-standers, being exposed? Some believe that this is like the Tobacco, Asbestos and Lead industry ~ that we won't know the real damage for decades.

When an industry is doing testing of 'prolonged' exposure, they need to include in their equation, additional EMF radiation. To date, no one has ever demonstrated a "safe" level for this radiation. Hypothetically, let's say a 10 year old child is getting x-rays, as he broke his foot at school. His mom is on her way to the hospital and while in the waiting room, he talks to her on his cell phone. Every evening this child sleeps next to his electric alarm clock and they live near a TV tower masts (these can emit radiation hundreds of times more powerful than cell phone towers i.e. Tiverton, RI) and he likes to watch his food in the microwave. The equation needs to be determined not just with cell phones, but with other environmental exposures.

Lastly, a British Medical Journal study revealed that drivers are four times more likely to experience a car accident.

A current poll in July 2005 on RadioFrequenciesafe.com produced some disturbing statistics. The question was 'Does your child use a cell phone?' Yes, 5-10 yr. olds (11.90%); Yes, 11-15 yr olds (23.81%); Yes, 16 yrs old & up (23.81%); Thinking about it (16.67%); No way, too dangerous for any age! (23.81%).

Solutions would be to ban your children, at least 16 and younger, from cell phone usage. To call your cell phone carrier demanding them to list the SAR value on the packaging. Call or write our State Representatives demanding they seek more protection for us by demanding 1) SAR be listed on cell phone packaging 2) Force cell phone industry to continue studies of EMF radiation and better ways to protect us from the antennae, and keep Towers away from children's schools/playgrounds. Lastly, set a good example, do not talk while driving and show restraint on when to take a call, ex: not in the

middle of dinner.

We must conclude from the above, that cell phone EMF's cannot be a good thing for children under 16. They are smaller and still developing and are more susceptible to exposures than we are. As parents, it's our duty to stay informed and fight to protect them. If DNA is being changed, do any of us who have the ability to procreate really want to affect our unborn future.

by Suzanne Arena, Cranston, RI

"The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it." Albert Einstein

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