

Reporter

EDITORIALS

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All things medical

Microwaves & micro-brains

Microwave radiation increases free radical destruction of our tissue. Microwave cooking and cell phones are our major sources for microwave damage. In particular, the electromagnetic radiation emitted by cell phones penetrates the adjacent neural tissue. The bigger the brain relative to the body, the bigger the risk. This is why some researchers who study cell phone human damage advise that children should not use them.

Last year, 21 studies on cell phone radiation were reviewed. None of them demonstrated that cell phone radiation is safe. The risks range from miniscule to five times for destruction of brain tissue and an increase incidence of tumor. The research was poorly controlled, based on people remembering the details about their cell phone use. Older studies on rats were reviewed by the FDA prior to the release of cell phones and showed there was "no significant damage to the DNA." However, we are not rats and there is a genetic predisposition to neurologic dysfunction and to cancer in some of us. But, to date, there is no easy way in determining who of us have this tendency.

Free radicals may be neutralized by our natural antioxidant system and specifically, superoxide dismutase and glutathione peroxidase. These could be augmented by Ginkgo biloba, resveratrol (from red wine) and quercetin (in fresh fruits). The farther the source of the microwave is away from the brain, the less the problem. However,

Dr.

J.E.

Block



an ear piece attachment is still dangerous, in that the microwaves are transmitted around the wire. An iron bead in the middle of the wire diminishes much of the damaging effect of this radiation. Even those who aren't connected by wire, such as the Blue Tooth device innovation, produce microwave radiation.

So, what is a person to do? Common sense dictates that the less time with the instrument to your head, the better. Another solution is a speaker phone, common in cordless phones and now available in cell phones.

As to whether or not cell phones do cause brain cancer and Alzheimer's disease, nobody knows for sure, but the great experiment on millions of people is ongoing and the next decade may show there indeed is a problem. I would much prefer not to be exposed to much micro-radiation and 10 years from now find that it really was benign, rather than expose myself and subsequently find I was doing myself harm and have the beginning of Alzheimer's or worse, a brain tumor!