

EMF Explained Series

EMF AND CANCER - L2

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Overview

There is sometimes media speculation and stories suggesting a possible link between mobile phones and cancer, and base stations and cancer clusters. This naturally can raise public concern however it is important to look at all of the available scientific evidence when making health risk assessments.

The World Health Organization and other health agencies conduct ongoing reviews into mobile phones, base stations and health looking at all of the available scientific research.

In relation to radio frequency emissions and health, the general conclusion from the World Health Organization (WHO) is;

"Despite extensive research, to date there is no evidence to conclude that exposure to low level electromagnetic fields is harmful to human health"

Summary of health Effects – Key point 6 <http://www.who.int/peh-emf/about/WhatisEMF/en/index1.html>

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EMF and Cancer - What research has been done?

There has been over 50 years of research conducted worldwide to investigate possible health effects, including cancer of mobile phones, base stations and other wireless devices. As technology advances, research continues into EMF increasing the overall scientific database and narrowing the gaps in knowledge.

View the [research timeline](#) for additional information

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Mobile Phones and Cancer - What do we know?

Specifically on mobile phones and health, the World Health Organization says;

"A large number of studies have been performed over the last two decades to assess whether mobile phones pose a potential health risk. To date, no adverse health effects have been established as being caused by mobile phone use."

[WHO Fact Sheet 193 June 2011 - Electromagnetic fields and public health: mobile phones](#)

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) says;

"With reference to radio frequency, available data do not show any excess risk of brain cancer and other neoplasms associated with the use of mobile phones"

[IARC World Cancer Report 2008 \(emr is page 170 Ch 2.12\)](#)

According to the IARC World Cancer Report 2008, the incidence of brain tumours since the introduction of widespread mobile phone use has remained relatively stable:

"After 1983 and more recently during the period of increasing prevalence of mobile phone users, the incidence has remained relatively stable for both men and women."

[IARC World Cancer Report 2008 \(page 461 Ch 5.23\)](#)

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Mobile Phones and Cancer – The INTERPHONE study

INTERPHONE is a World Health Organization (WHO) research project coordinated by a WHO agency to assess whether mobile telephone use is associated with an increase in cancer risk.

INTERPHONE consists of national case-control studies in 13 countries and is co-ordinated by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

In May 2010, the INTERPHONE researchers published the results of the combined analysis for glioma and meningioma and found overall no increased risk of brain cancer from mobile phone use.

In announcing the results for glioma and meningioma, Dr Christopher Wild, Director of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) said:

"An increased risk of brain cancer is not established from the data from INTERPHONE. However, observations at the highest level of cumulative call time and the changing patterns of mobile phone use since the period studied by INTERPHONE, particularly in young people, mean that further investigation of mobile phone use and brain cancer risk is merited."

[Click here for the IARC May 2010 INTERPHONE Press release](#)

[Click here for INTERPHONE Explained](#)

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Base Stations and Cancer - What do we know?

Specifically on suspected cancer clusters around base stations, the World Health Organization says;

"Media or anecdotal reports of cancer clusters around mobile phone base stations have heightened public concern. It should be noted that geographically, cancers are unevenly distributed among any population. Given the widespread presence of base stations in the environment, it is expected that possible cancer clusters will occur near base stations merely by chance. Moreover, the reported cancers in these clusters are often a collection of different types of cancer with no common characteristics and hence unlikely to have a common cause"

(WHO Fact Sheet 304 Base Stations & Wireless networks
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs304/en/index.html>)

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Summary

Numerous independent scientific expert panels, health authorities, government agencies and standard-setting organisations around the world regularly review this large and growing body of research.

These organisations have all reached the same general scientific conclusion that there is no established evidence of any adverse health effects from exposure to radio waves when present at or below the limits applied to wireless communications systems

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