No Link Between Cell Phones and Brain Cancer

A World Health Organization–commissioned review found that cellphones were safe to use, even over long periods of time.

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Cellphone use is not linked to an increased risk for brain or other cancers, according to the findings of a review backed by the World Health Organization (WHO), Reuters reports.

A panel of experts from 10 countries analyzed thousands of studies published between 1994 to 2022, using 63 for their final analysis. The panel found that the effects of radio frequency waves commonly used by wireless electronics, including cellphones, televisions, baby monitors and radar, do not increase the risk for brain cancer, even among those who spend a lot of time on their cellphones daily or have used cellphones for more than 10 years.

Although cellphones emit radiation in the radio frequency region of the electromagnetic spectrum, the frequency is too low to cause the kinds of changes to DNA that could increase cancer risk, according to the National Cancer Institute.

For the WHO analysis, experts observed brain cancers—as well as cancers of the pituitary gland, salivary glands and leukemia—in adults and children and the risks linked to increased exposure to radio frequency waves commonly used by wireless electronics.

Experts found no increased risk for leukemia or brain cancer in adults or children exposed to radio or TV transmitters or cellphone towers.

In 2011, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the WHO's cancer agency, classified radio wave exposure as a possible carcinogen to humans; however, that was based on limited evidence from observational studies. Since then, more studies on radio waves have been released, prompting the WHO to back the new review, according to The Washington Post.

Indeed, other international health organizations have said there is no definitive evidence of radiation from cellphones causing adverse health effects. For example, the Food and Drug Administration reviewed a decade of animal and epidemiological studies of the potential health effects of exposure to cellphone radiation and found “insufficient evidence” linking such exposure to a higher risk of cancer.

Brain cancer is uncommon; indeed, the lifetime risk of developing a malignant tumor of the brain or spinal cord is less than 1%, according to the American Cancer Society. About 25,400 malignant brain and spinal cord cancers are diagnosed in the United States each year, and about 18,760 people die of these cancers annually.

Many types of brain cancer have no known risk factor, and, in most cases, there is no clear cause. Genetic factors, environmental toxins and cigarette smoking have all been linked to cancers of the brain. HIV infection is also associated with an increased risk for some brain cancers.

The WHO’s evaluation will be released early next year, according to Reuters.

To read more, click #Brain Cancer. There, you’ll find headlines such as “FDA Approves New Targeted Therapy for Brain Cancer,” “More to Brain Tumors Than Meets the Eye” and “Doctor Is Cancer-Free Following World-First Treatment He Developed.”
