

# Mobile phone and brain tumor risk

By DR. JOHN BRIFFA

Mobile phones are undeniably convenient, but the fact that they emit electromagnetic radiation means that they have the potential to affect individuals who use them.

For a long time, the party line was that mobile phones are safe. This is a message the industry has been particularly keen to cultivate. However, some evidence suggests otherwise. In this column last year, I wrote about a study that found that mobile phone use was associated with an increased risk of gliomas (the most common form of brain tumor) and acoustic neuromas (benign tumors that grow on the nerve responsible for hearing).

This week, I came across a newspaper report in the Daily Telegraph of a World Health Organization (WHO) study that raises further doubts about the safety of mobile phones. The study involved interviewing almost 13,000 people from 2000 to 2004 in over 13 countries. The study has yet to be published (it is due for publication later this year), but the report about it claims that:

- Six of eight studies found an increased risk of glioma associated with mobile phone use.
- Two of seven studies found an increased risk of acoustic neuroma associated with long-term mobile phone use.

One study found an increased risk of tumors of the parotid gland (a salivary gland in the side of the face near where mobile phones are held) associated with heavy mobile phone use.

The results, though not entirely conclusive, clearly have concerned the WHO. Its head, Dr. Elisabeth Cardis, is quoted as saying, "In the absence of definitive results and in the light of a number of studies which, though limited,



PLAY IT SAFE: Minimize cell phone use. PHOTOS.COM

suggest a possible effect of radio-frequency radiation, precautions are important."

There is particular concern regarding use by children, as their thinner skulls are less likely to shield the brain from harmful frequencies.

I suggest, whatever age you happen to be, that you use your mobile phone as infrequently as possible, and for as short a time as possible when you do. I make as much of my mobile phone communication via SMS or text.

Communication in a few words of text can be quicker and just as good as a phone call.

References can be found here: [theepochtimes.com/nz/content/view/24720](http://theepochtimes.com/nz/content/view/24720)

Dr. John Briffa is a London-based physician and health writer with an interest in nutrition and natural medicine. His Web site is [Drbriffa.com](http://Drbriffa.com)