

Cell Phones Users Beware!

By GJ Maxwell

Not long ago, cell phones were large, bulky and inconvenient to handle. Today they are small, convenient, very high tech, and they will fit inside a pocket or purse. An individual can check their email, weather, play games, and more. Why wouldn't you want a cell phone? Ninety percent of the population in the United States are cell phone users. In spite of all this, a raging controversy exists on whether cell phones are safe or not. An accumulating amount of research is making a strong correlation between health risks and driving dangers. Cell phones put everyone in danger by causing cancer, brain tumors, and increasing the risk of traffic accidents.

The World Health Organization states, “to date, no adverse health effects have been established for mobile phone use.” However, becoming increasingly concerned about cell phone use, scientists are, “... starting to scrutinize how invisible electromagnetic fields affect human health...” (MotherJones.com). Concerned about these health issues, they include increased brain tumors, cancer, headaches, concentration issues, and sleeping difficulties. Regularly, people around the world are using cell phones. Cell phones are small and convenient, there are “...more than 2.4 billion cell phone users — and more than 1,000 new customers are added every minute...” (theGlobalist.com). Along with health concerns, statistics show that driving and using a cellphone increases the risk of accidents. In 2009, “of the 5,474 killed because of distracted driving, 995 involved reports of a cell phone as a factor. However, the number of fatalities caused by cell phone use could be much higher. For those who were injured, 24,000 involved reports of cell phone use as a distraction” (Edgar Snyder & Associates).

To begin with, cell phone users are positioning themselves for consequential health risks. Growing rapidly, more and more evidence that cell phones are causing cancer and brain tumors

are uncovered by researchers. Hand held phones contain radiation, known as radio frequency (RF). Nearly 300 million people in this country have cell phones that are accessible at their fingertips. One study showed that children under the age of eight absorb twice the amount of radiation into their brain tissue compared to adults because of the thickness of their skull (ProCon.org). In Sweden, Dr Lennart Hardell, who is a professor in oncology and cancer epidemiology at the University Hospital in Orebro, researched the effects between cell phone use and health risks. He found out: the higher the hours, the higher the risk; the higher the radiated power, the higher the risk; analog versus digital; rural versus urban users; the higher the number of years since first use, the higher the risk; the higher the number of calls, the higher the risk; the higher the exposure, the higher the risk; the younger the user, the higher the risk. Evidence shows that a tumor on one side of the head, is correlated with cell phone use on that same side (ProCon.org). As anyone can see, cell phone use is hazardous to health.

In addition to being a health risk, there are other hidden dangers. Although cell phones can be handy, the risks can be fatal. If someone is driving while using a cellphone, it increases their risk of a traffic accident. More and more studies are showing the use of cell phones and accidents. In 2003, ABC News did a report about the government safety experts who did not inform the public about using cell phones while driving. Clarence Ditlow, at the Center for Auto Safety, states that, "what the government knew is that talking and driving is just as bad as drinking and driving." (YouTube.com). Another study from April 2002 to July 2004 by the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety (IIHS), revealed that people who use hand held phones were four times more likely to end up in an accident resulting in an emergency room visit (MobiOil.com). With millions of cell phone users, our roads are in danger. Although hand held phones are small and convenient, the hazards of misusing them can have deadly results.

On the other hand, cell phones can be very useful. The other side will argue that cell phones do not cause any type of health risk at all. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) have concluded there is no data that shows a connection between cell phones and cancer (ProCon.org). However, from the overwhelming evidence from the scientific world, it is distinctly clear that there is a strong interconnection between cell phone use and health dangers. Along with that, there are those who say, “every state that currently reports data from crash sites shows that wireless phone use is a factor in less than 1% of accidents.” (CTIA.org) Although that sounds not too bad, it is important to remember using a cell phone and driving puts an individual four times the risk of ending up at an emergency room.

To sum up, even though researchers are finding strong connections between health and driving risks, nearly all of the nation uses them. It is clear to see the use of cell phones are hazardous to everyone's health by causing fatal diseases and raising the risk of traffic injuries. For these reasons, cell phones users beware!

Works Cited

"Are Cell Phones Safe?" Web. 21 Mar. 2011. <<http://cellphones.procon.org/>>.

"Car Accident Cell Phone Statistics." Web. 11 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.edgarsnyder.com/car-accident/cell-phone/statistics.html>>.

"Car Care for a Better Ride." Web. 11 Apr. 2011. <http://www.mobiloil.com/USA-English/MotorOil/Car_Care/Notes_From_The_Road/Cell_Phone_Crash_Stats_.aspx?pg=1>.

"Driving Dangers Report Hidden for Years." Web. 21 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IaZQ3MQGkM>>.

"Driving Tips." Web. 13 Apr. 2011. <http://www.ctia.org/consumer_info/safety/index.cfm/AID/10369>.

"How to Avoid Cell Phone Dangers." Web. 29 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.oprah.com/health/Dr-Oz-Explains-Cell-Phone-Dangers-and-How-to-Avoid-Them>>.