

The Cell Phone Trap: The Health Hazards

Review of Devra Davis' book

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Theme: [Science and Medicine](#)

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It is now inconceivable that our world could function without the 5 billion cell phones used globally. The new book by Devra Davis "[Disconnect](#)" deserves your attention. Indeed, if you use a cell phone a lot it should be mandatory reading.

It also seems inconceivable that the trillion dollar cell phone industry and governments worldwide could have pushed this technology without ever having solid research results proving the safety of cell phones. If true that would be deadly frightening. But that is exactly the reality.

Is this a bizarre slip up or an intentional conspiracy between corporate and government interests? The more you learn the more you fear. Nightmarishly, cell phone technology has become too big to fail, no matter its deadly risks. Government won't protect you, so you have to protect yourself.

Let me note that I rarely use my cell phone. Very few people have my number and I rarely turn it on, except when I need to make a call. As a former professor of engineering I have always seen technology as offering risks, not just heavily commercialized benefits. The risks are often dismissed, poorly studied or just plain ignored.

And by now everyone should be concerned that neither government regulations nor corporate responsibility protect us very well from harmful foods, prescription drugs and manufactured products.

Facing the truth is often painful, but if you care about protecting your health and the health of people you love, then this is a book you definitely want to read and get others to read. Make no mistake, what you learn will upset you, but beyond getting angry at companies and the government for not adequately protecting against a man made public health disaster, you will be motivated to change your behavior. The subtitle sums up the theme: The Truth About Cell Phone Radiation, What the Industry Has Done to Hide It, and How to Protect Your Family.

Here are some of the eye-popping facts and insights I picked up from reading of this book.

Tests show young men who keep their phones in a pants pocket have reduced sperm counts.

Some scientists have, for decades, known about the adverse effects that radiofrequency causes in the brain. For example, radiofrequency allows chemicals and toxins from the

blood, which are normally kept away from the nervous system, to enter the brain and cause disease.

The work of Dr. Lennart Hardell in Sweden should make cell phone users reconsider their practices. Swedes who have used cell phones the most and for the longest times have more malignant brain tumors than others. After a decade of use the risk of brain tumors is doubled. Similar results were found by scientists in Israel , Finland , Russia and England . Hardell has also found that teenagers using cell phones end up after a decade with four times more brain cancers.

The book highlights what the distinguished research scientist Dariusz Leszczynski said: “we clearly showed that radiation from a phone had a biological impact. After this work, which in fact repeated that of many others...the world could no longer pretend that the only problems with cell phones occurred after you could measure a change in temperature. This view was always mistaken, of course, and our work showed that.” In other words, much lower power than in microwave ovens does not mean the absence of effects on our bodies.

Davis makes the inescapable point at the end of the book that “we need to invest in cell phones’ safety as we do with other modern technologies.” But it is not clear whether that is proceeding as it should. Do you think industry and government will do the right thing and risk getting research results that could devastate cell phone usage? With corporate interests corrupting Congress it is highly unlikely that what is needed in terms of research and regulation will happen.

What should cell phone users do? They and children in particular should not be using cell phones without “ear buds.” They should not keep cell phones that are turned on in their clothing next to their body. Use the speaker option. Recognize that texting and other phone functions can be less dangerous than holding a phone next to your head to hear. Remember that cordless phones also pose similar radiation hazards, so minimize their use at home.

I wonder whether the richest and most powerful people in society, like President Obama (and his children), have been strongly advised to not hold cell phones next to the head.

Bottom line: Your addiction to cell phone use just might be your downfall. How much risk do you want to take? Smart phones are the rage. Now we need a lot more smart people. Disconnect. The more you use your cell phone, the more trapped you are.

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