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For Members Only

Mobile Phones and Health Issues

One of the most common sights we see these days, is that of people with their mobile phones next to their ears. A boon for better communication, cell phone usage nonetheless has many health hazards. Various studies indicate that the emissions from a cell phone can be extremely harmful, causing genetic damage, tumors, memory loss, and increased blood pressure and weakening of the immune system. This is alarming information, and one has to take into account all these factors.

Though there is no evidence of cell phones causing cancer or any such illness, but the suspicion, or fear of the same is not baseless either. The electromagnetic radiation from cell phones does have a potential link to cancer. The fact that this radiation is invisible, intangible, and enters and leaves our bodies without our knowledge makes it even more intimidating.

Possible hazards

Two minutes of exposure to emissions from mobile phones can disable a safety barrier in blood causing proteins and toxins to leak into the brain, could increase chances of developing Alzheimer's multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's.

Scientists say exposure to the phones' low-level radiation causes red blood cells to leak hemoglobin and can lead to heart disease and kidney stones.

Recent studies suggesting a link between cell-phone use and brain tumors, and the possibility that the microwaves could ignite petroleum fumes at gas stations.

A cell phone unit, or communications tower, has so many of the radiation emanating gadgets. This can be a problem for its immediate environment.

RI President's Message July 2022

Every month since I joined Rotary, I've looked forward to reading this magazine, especially the opening essay from our Rotary president. I'll admit that as much as I appreciate a digital copy, I still revel in the tactile sensation of sitting down and leafing through the glossy pages. They are a treasure trove of photos and memorable stories about our great organization — the one we all know and love. I have learned so much over the years about service projects and lives that each of you have transformed.

As a communications professional, I have longed for the day that our stories were a regular part of mainstream media and that our flagship magazine might populate doctor's offices, coffee shops, or anywhere else people sit, wait, and browse. It's great that Rotary members are better informed about all we do, and wouldn't it be that much better if more people knew our stories.

All this was top of mind as I thought about our plans for promoting Rotary worldwide in the upcoming year. Over the next 12 months, we are going to shine a light on projects that put Rotary service on display to the world, and we are going to do it strategically. Nick and I will focus on some of the highest impact, sustainable, and scalable Rotary projects from our areas of focus in what we call the Imagine Impact Tour.

We are inviting top-tier journalists, thought leaders, and influencers to use their channels to help us raise awareness by reaching people who want to serve but have not yet realized they can do it through Rotary.

But there was another important issue to consider — our carbon footprint. I take seriously Rotary's emerging leadership position on environmental issues. The example set by our members during the pandemic is fundamental to how we carve out our future.

That means we will harness digital technology to tell these stories — we will be tweeting, posting, and "going live" to anyone who will listen. We must consider our environment, and part of that means not always traveling but continuing to connect in meaningful ways as we have for the past two years.

Of course, we are social people, and we still need to be together. We simply need to be more mindful of our decisions and think about how we get together just a little bit differently. For example, if we travel to visit a project, we will plan successive visits in neighboring areas.

So, what are your stories and who can help tell them? I hope you might consider your own Imagine Impact efforts — your story might be something you can promote just as easily on social media or during a Zoom call. Think about ways to showcase notable projects in your clubs and districts.

We all feel the impact that Rotary service and values have on us. Now it's our opportunity to share that feeling with others.

Jennifer Jones
President 2022-23

Cancer / Tumors

Studies have been conducted suggesting that rats that have been exposed to microwaves similar to the sort generated by mobile phones but more powerful, showed breaks in their DNA which could indicate an adverse effect. Also, mice exposed to radiation for 18 months developed brain tumors. Though of course, these studies are not concrete proof.

Blood Pressure

It was observed that people using cell phones were prone to high blood pressure. Again, there isn't any concrete evidence of the same.

Pregnancy

A study at the University of Montpellier in France was carried out on 6000 chick embryos and suggested that the heavily exposed chick eggs were five times less likely to survive than the control group.

This study raised questions about possible effects on pregnant women but it has not yet appeared in peer-reviewed scientific literature or been reproduced, so its findings are difficult to assess.

Headaches, Heating Effects, Fatigue

A study brought out that longer the people used mobile phones, the more likely they were to report symptoms such as hot ears, burning skin, headaches and fatigue.

The study did not include a control group (that is people who do not use mobile phones, to make a comparison); therefore the symptoms reported could have been caused by any number of other factors in the mobile phones users' environment, such as working with computers, stress, driving or reading.

Memory

There have been various studies into the connection between mobile phones and memory loss. A study looked into the effect of radiofrequency (RF) on the section of rats' brains that is linked with the memory. The results showed that RF could modify signals in the cells in a part of the brain that is responsible for learning and short term memory.

Posture

Some researchers claim that holding a mobile phone between the raised shoulder and the ear could have a damaging effect on muscles, bones, tendons and discs. These problems would apply equally to a cordless phone or a landline phone as to a mobile phone and are the effect of bad posture.

Mobile Phones and Children

Because of their smaller heads, thinner skulls and higher tissue conductivity, children may absorb more energy from a given phone than adults.

Prevention Tips

Cell phones should be used for emergencies, and not for long conversations.

A small chip-like cell phone microwave radiation protection device is available, which has the ability to absorb electromagnetic energy waves from your mobile phone. It helps in reducing the potential harmful effects of these emissions to the human body.

Using a mobile headset is a good idea, you don't have to hold phones next to your ears all the time.

Use a hands free mobile car kit while driving, without taking your hands off the steering wheel.

THE WHO RULES

Mobile phone users should limit their exposure to harmful radio frequencies by cutting the length of calls.

Hands-free devices cut exposure by keeping the instrument away from the head and body.

Driving cum mobile phone talking should be banned.

Mobile phones should not be used in Intensive Care Units of hospitals as they can pose a danger to patients by interfering with the working of pacemakers and defibrillators.

People with hearing aids should not use mobile phones.

Base stations, which have low powered antennae on their terrace to communicate with cell phones, should not be located near children's schools and playgrounds.

CELL PHONES WHILE DRIVING

Studies indicate that a lot of car accidents have happened, while the driver was on the phone. This is because while driving, one obviously needs to concentrate, and talking on a phone doesn't help. Some countries like Portugal have banned the use of cell phones, which may not be very practical, as their main use is to be reachable while you are on the move. Thus, it is important to take certain precautions while driving:

Position your phone within easy reach so that you don't have to take your eyes off the road.

Get to know the features of your cell phone - speed dial, redial, voice mail, they can be your lifesaver. But don't dial and drive at the same time. Use a hands free kit.

Avoid using a phone when road conditions are hazardous or traffic is heavy. You can let your voice mail take messages and then call back later.

Don't engage in stressful conversations that may distract your attention from the road.

Don't take notes or look up phone numbers whilst driving, wait till you can pull over.

User abbreviated speed dialing. In fact, voice activated dialing is even better. It leaves both hands free. Frequently called numbers can be programmed.

Have an answering machine installed that could take messages until you can return the calls. Let your co-passenger handle the calls if you are not travelling alone.

Globalisation is the new mantra. In this age, it is very difficult not to have technology. But with technology, come certain hazards. The only way to beat these is again, better technology. Electromagnetic radiation is everywhere. More and more wireless communication services (cellular phones, paging, wireless Internet) are expected so is the artificial electromagnetic radiation. It seems that there is no way to reverse this trend. Scientists and engineers are developing better and safer wireless systems and devices. Smaller cell size, better base station antennas and other more advanced technologies will allow future cell phones to radiate much lower power. So one can only hope that cell phone hazards will be reduced.

(courtesy : www.compareindia.com)

Invite your friends and relatives to attend our regular weekly meeting.