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Do we need protection from cellphones?

With more than 7 billion cellphones in use around the world these days, the question that won't go away is how harmful are the radiofrequency emissions to human health?

So-called observational studies, which have looked at large populations in Europe, the United States and New Zealand have not established a definitive link between cellphones and brain cancer.

The studies have relied on survey data, which is weak science, asking people to remember back to how often they used cellphones. Keep in mind the amount of brain cancer in the world hasn't increased despite the dramatic increase in cellphone use. And today's cellphones and smartphones emit much less radiation than those a decade ago, when most of these studies were conducted.

But although cellular and DNA analysis has not shown the radiofrequency waves emitted by cellphones cause disruption, mutation or the kind of early changes that could lead to cancer, we still remain concerned that it could be doing some kind of damage; a [Yale Study](#) suggested links between fetal development and cellphone use.

Many of us hold our iPhones or Blackberries so close to our skull that we can literally feel our ears growing warm. How could this be completely harmless? Was the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a division of the World Health Organization, totally wrong when [in 2011 it convened 31 experts in France](#) who put their heads together and concluded that cellphones are "possible carcinogens?"

If not wrong, I certainly believe they were premature.

Yet, even if cellphones end up being completely harmless, still we look for ways to curb the specific absorption rate (SAR) of radiation from all sources including these phones.

This week, there is a [symposium at the City University of New York Graduate Center](#) to discuss the Bodywell Chip, a device that claims to reduce the amount of energy the body absorbs from cellphones. The chip contains imprinted materials, which [emit frequencies claiming to counteract the SAR radiation](#) of the cell phone.

The [chip has been tested effectively](#) on simulated brain cells, though no significant human trials have yet been undertaken.

Whether this device or another one down the line actually has any protective effect on human health either way, ways to block the effects of cellphone emissions are worth discussing and investigating. Do these emissions actually cause us harm? And, is there a device out there that can actually help protect us?

Whatever we learn down the road, it certainly makes sense to keep track of the use and misuse of our iPhones.

Dr. Marc Siegel is an associate professor of medicine and medical director of Doctor Radio at NYU Langone Medical Center. He is a member of the Fox News Medical A Team and author of several books, including "False Alarm; the Truth About the Epidemic of Fear"; He is also the author of "Swine Flu and Bird Flu." His most recent book is [The Inner Pulse: Unlocking the Secret Code of Sickness and Health](#).