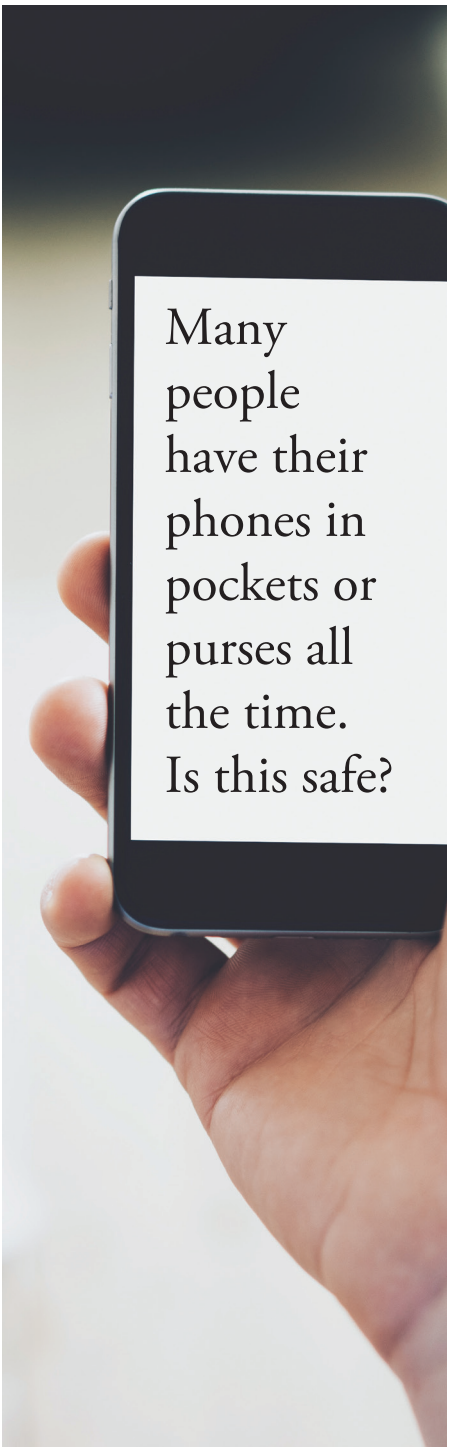


Do cell phones *cause cancer?*

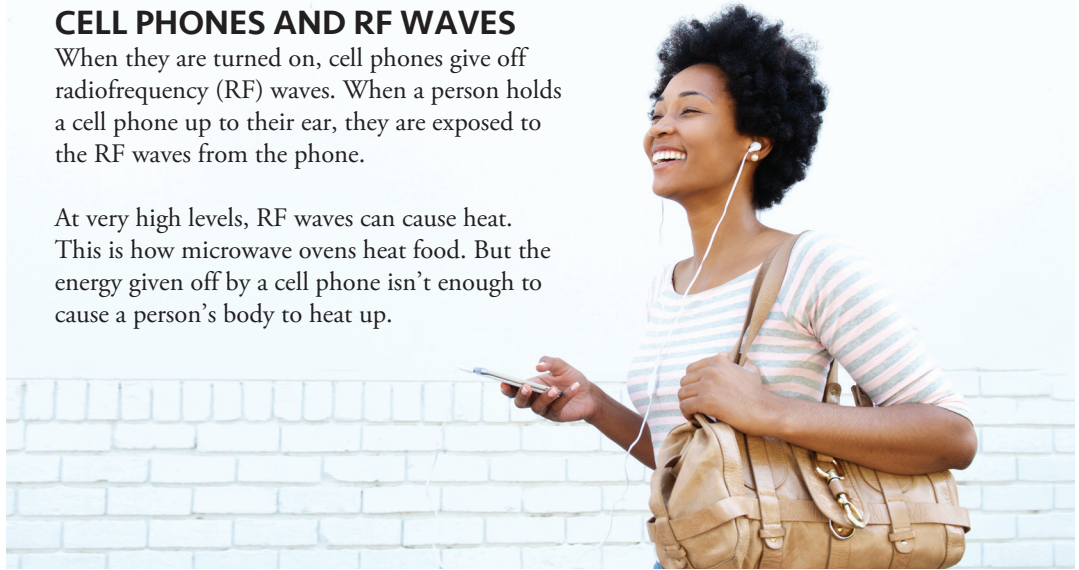


Many people have their phones in pockets or purses all the time. Is this safe?

CELL PHONES AND RF WAVES

When they are turned on, cell phones give off radiofrequency (RF) waves. When a person holds a cell phone up to their ear, they are exposed to the RF waves from the phone.

At very high levels, RF waves can cause heat. This is how microwave ovens heat food. But the energy given off by a cell phone isn't enough to cause a person's body to heat up.



MOST STUDIES SAY "NO"

Studies on rats have found that exposing their entire bodies to RF waves for long periods of time may increase the risk of a certain type of tumor. The levels used in this study were much higher than what a person would experience from normal everyday cell phone use.

Most studies on humans have found that people who have brain tumors do not use cell phones more than people who don't have tumors. Other human studies have found that brain tumors don't happen more on the side of the head where people hold their cell phones. Both results seem to suggest that cell phones do not cause brain tumors.

But a few studies have found an increased tumor risk on the side of the head where a person usually holds their cell phone.

Researchers believe we need more studies to find out for sure whether cell phones could be linked to cancer.



WHAT SHOULD I DO?

The American Cancer Society says RF waves are not as strong as different types of radiation like x-rays and UV light. X-rays and UV light can damage DNA. RF waves from cell phones are much weaker and don't cause DNA damage. This means they would not make changes that could cause a tumor to form.

But, if you want to avoid exposure to RF waves, you can:

- Keep your phone away from your body. Don't keep it in your pocket when it's turned on.
- Use the speaker function or an earpiece when talking on the phone.

Source: American Cancer Society