



## Letter to the Editor

**Health risks of cell phone technology***Dear Editor:*

The editorial by Dr Pawl [12] is timely and discusses an emerging public health concern. This reignited debate [9] has not escaped the attention of the US Congress, whose Subcommittee on Domestic Policy chaired by Congressman Dennis Kucinich held a landmark hearing regarding this topic on September 25, 2008 [7]. The proposed health ramifications of ubiquitous and chronic immersion in the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) of cell phones and transmission masts are not only limited to brain tumors but also include salivary gland tumors [13], male infertility [1,5], behavioral disturbances [4], and electrohypersensitivity (previously “microwave sickness syndrome”) [10]. Since the publication of the seminal *BioInitiative Report* [2] in August 2007 by a multinational group of recognized scientists, physicians, and policy makers, important steps have been taken in many countries [8], urging evidence-based precaution as compelling new long-term epidemiologic data accrue from the Hardell group and World Health Organization-administered INTERPHONE consortium [6]. It is recommended that serial age-adjusted primary central nervous system tumor incidence rates from databases, such as those of the Central Brain Tumor Registry of the United States [3], be carefully followed in time for trends. Although there is no currently proven mechanism via which cell phone radiation can cause neoplasia, it is notable that there are more than one dozen peer-reviewed papers from laboratories in at least 7 countries including the United States showing that cell phone or similar low-intensity EMFs can break DNA or modulate it structurally [11], despite comments stating otherwise [14]. A simple precautionary step includes using a landline in preference to a cell phone whenever possible. If talking on a cell phone, a wired earpiece or speaker-phone mode should be used to increase the distance between the antenna (external or concealed) and the user’s head. Restricting children’s cell phone usage should also be strongly considered given the recent testimony of Dr Ronald Herberman and Dr David Carpenter [7].

Vini G. Khurana, MBBS, PhD, FRACS  
*The Canberra Hospital  
 Canberra, Australia*

Charles Teo, MBBS, FRACS  
*Prince of Wales Private Hospital  
 New South Wales, Australia*

Richard G. Bittar, MBBS, PhD, FRACS  
*Royal Melbourne Hospital and The Alfred Hospital  
 Victoria, Australia*

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## **Commentary**

Obviously, I cannot agree with Dr Khurana more. His cautions are in line with my own, as stated in the referenced

editorial. He is one of the finders; I am just a messenger. Hopefully, the committee action initiated by Congressman Kucinich will lead to appropriate further research and regulatory changes as needed.

Ron Pawl, MD  
*Department of Neurosurgery*  
*University of Illinois*  
*Lake Forest, IL 60045, USA*