

EMF Explained Series

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY - LATEST ON CELL PHONE TOWERS

The American Cancer Society has updated its public information on [cell phone towers and cancer](#).

Do cellular phone towers cause cancer?

Some people have expressed concern that living, working, or going to school near a cell phone tower might increase the risk of cancer or other health problems. At this time, there is very little evidence to support this idea. In theory, there are some important points that would argue against cellular phone towers being able to cause cancer.

- First, the energy level of radiofrequency (RF) waves is relatively low, especially when compared with the types of radiation that are known to increase cancer risk, such as gamma rays, x-rays, and ultraviolet (UV) light. The energy of RF waves given off by cell phone towers is not enough to break chemical bonds in DNA molecules, which is how these stronger forms of radiation may lead to cancer.
- A second issue has to do with wavelength. RF waves have long wavelengths, which can only be concentrated to about an inch or two in size. This makes it unlikely that the energy from RF waves could be concentrated enough to affect individual cells in the body.
- Third, even if RF waves were somehow able to affect cells in the body at higher doses, the level of RF waves present at ground level is very low – well below the recommended limits. Levels of energy from RF waves near cell phone towers are not significantly different from the background levels of RF radiation in urban areas from other sources, such as radio and television broadcast stations.

For these reasons, most scientists agree that cell phone antennas or towers are unlikely to cause cancer

Do cellular phone towers cause any other health problems?

High levels of RF waves can cause a warming of body tissues, but the energy levels on the ground near a cell phone tower are far below the levels needed to cause this effect. So far, there is no evidence in published scientific reports that cell phone towers cause any other health problems.

Click here for the [American Cancer Society information on cell phone towers](#)

The [American Cancer Society](#) is a nationwide, community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem