

Electromagnetic Fields and your Immune System

Recent newspaper articles have highlighted the potential dangers of Electro-magnetic Fields (EMF).

New Zealand researchers at Auckland University were reported as saying that the effects are more widespread than what previous studies had shown.

The effects already indicted include leukemia in children, and asthma and depression in adults.

What are Electro-magnetic fields?

EMFs are a type of low-frequency radiation emitted from everything electrical around us, eg power lines, transformers, electrical wiring, computers, TVs, lights, clocks, appliances, etc. Recent studies have linked EMFs to increased leukemia, lymphoma, brain cancer, melanoma, breast cancer, miscarriage, birth defects, suicide, and most recently, Alzheimer's disease.

It has been suggested that this wide range of health problems may be due to EMFs' effects on the pineal gland, which is the master gland of the body, secreting hormones which control our circadian rhythms, and regulate important functions of the brain and all the other glands.

Overseas researchers have discovered that EMFs can suppress the pineal glands' secretion of melatonin, a hormone which controls our wake/sleep cycle, moods and task performance. Depressed melatonin levels are associated with mood changes, depression and psychiatric disorders. Melatonin also plays a critical cancer role, by increasing the strength of the body's natural killer lymphocytes. Suppression of pineal gland function has been implicated in the cause of breast, ovarian, prostate and melanoma cancers.

Other studies have linked EMFs to decreased production of enzymes called "protein kinases" in human lymphocyte cells. This also indicates that EMFs can suppress the immune system. Now, if EMFs can suppress the immune system to the point where cancer rates double or triple, what other effects might a suppressed immune system have on our day-to-day health and well being? Do we experience more colds, more allergies, and more susceptibility to other seemingly unrelated medical problems? Are we less capable of handling chemical pollution from the environment?

And today, considering the prevalence of immune related disorders--from allergies to AIDS--wouldn't it be wise to support (rather than suppress) the immune system? A natural, holistic approach to health would suggest reducing EMFs as much as reasonably possible.

Most EMF exposure come from power lines and electrical wiring. Other common sources are waterbeds, electric blankets, computers, fluorescent lights, TVs, telephones, appliances and automobiles. To detect magnetic fields, you can buy or rent a gaussmeter, or have a professional perform an inspection. Reductions can be as simple as avoiding high exposure locations. Electrical wiring can be repaired and installed according to low-EMF methods. Specific sources can be shielded. Low emission computers, telephones and appliances are becoming available.

Anecdotal evidence indicated that AC (alternating current) electric fields are often involved when people are knowingly "sensitive" to electricity. Often referred to as "wired and tired," they may experience conditions ranging from a rather vague discomfort or irritation. to headaches, fatigue and other symptoms.

Some individuals handle it better, perhaps having a stronger resistance to life's stresses. Others are more sensitive, and in extreme cases may experience allergies, depression, environmental illness, or chronic fatigue syndrome.

If you are the type of person who feels better when the electricity suddenly goes off during a power failure, or when walking out in the woods away from any electricity, you may be sensitive to electric fields.

Most electric field exposures come from building wiring. The remainder come from cords, appliances and nearby power lines. Electric fields are easy to reduce. Here are some tips.

How to reduce Electro-magnetic fields in your home and work.

1. Have the E.M. field strength measured in areas where you spend a lot of time, ie. bedroom, workplace, kitchen etc.
2. Rearrange sleeping quarters so the bed is not located in a high E.M. zone.
3. Keep the electrical appliances and equipment away from the head of the bed.
4. Unplug appliances and equipment when not in use.
5. Avoid using electric blankets
6. Avoid using heating unit in water bed and use insulation
7. Do not stand in front of microwave oven when in use.
8. Inspect or have inspected door seal for damage, then have it repaired.
9. Use sheilded wiring
10. Have walls checked to determine where wiring is located.
11. Keep at least three feet distance from unshilded lines in rooms or walls.
12. Buy sheilded equipment and appliances (metal casing and ground wire.)
13. Keep six feet distance from unshilded appliances or equipment.
14. Step away from photocopy machine, during the copying process.
15. Before renting or buying property, check distance from powerlines.
16. Have your home or workplace checked for high electro-magnetic exposure

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