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iPhones and Droids and More

I have an iPhone 3. I wouldn't switch to anything else because it's easy to use, stores music and books I can use when I work out, and connects me to the Internet when I need to check something out while away from home. Paula seems to be addicted to her Droid 3. But sometimes, I don't think we realize that cell phones generate radiation when we're connected to the net.

First example. I was listening to a music service while on the elliptical trainer at the gym. I happened to set the phone on one of the displays that cycles steps and distance. The numbers just kept cycling at about five times per second. I moved the phone and it stopped.

Second example. I was running outside this past weekend, listening to the same Internet music service via headphones. I also had my GPS watch to monitor pace and distance. I'm no speed demon when I run, but I knew I was doing better than 11 minutes per mile, which is what the display said; I sped up and no change. So I decided to move my cell phone from my left pocket, the side I had my watch, to the right pocket. Almost immediately the pace changed and it showed I was running faster, even though I had to slow down to make the switch. I decided to forego the Internet music and listen to my playlist.

I'm not telling you this to freak you out about radiation from cell phones like some Internet gurus have done. I checked the SAR (specific absorption rate) of my phone, and it's well below the government standard for safety (1). So is Paula's Droid 3. Believe me, if I thought there was real danger, our habits would change immediately.

My purpose is to make you aware that these are not magic boxes. They're high tech and when you're on the phone, there's some radiation emitted. But what we don't realize is that the same is true when we're using an application that connects us to the Internet. Awareness doesn't equate to fear in my book. Just realize it and turn off apps when you're not using your phone. Me? I'm sticking to my playlist when I run outside because I like to know exactly how fast I'm going—as slow as that may be right now.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: www.sarshield.com/english/radiationchart.htm.

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