

# THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF CELL PHONE USE

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**HEARING**  
BEFORE A  
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

**SPECIAL HEARING**  
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Senator HARKIN. Well, thank you very much, Dr. Bucher. I'm going to yield now to Senator Specter.

Senator SPECTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You had mentioned children. What are the considerations with respect to an additional potential risk for children using cell phones?

Dr. BUCHER. What was the question?

Senator SPECTER. What is the potential additional risk for children using cell phones? I read in a letter, sir, to give you a little help, that brain formation in its early stages may raise an additional susceptibility. Is there something to that?

Dr. BUCHER. I think with respect to many, exposures to many agents, as we study more and more agents and look at different life stages where these agents are being exposed to children or to animals—

Senator SPECTER. Let's not take up animals. How about children? Is there a significant risk there? I've got 5 minutes, Dr. Bucher.

Dr. BUCHER. Children have a configuration of their skull that does allow penetration of cell phone radiation deeper—

Senator SPECTER. Are you saying there's a potentially greater risk?

Dr. BUCHER. I'm saying there potentially is a greater risk—

Senator SPECTER. What limitations, if any—any parents that are watching this on C-SPAN, what should they do?

Dr. BUCHER. I wish I had a good answer to that. I think that—

Senator SPECTER. Well, would there be a precautionary approach? I understand some of the foreign countries are recommending that there be a limitation. Is that true, on the use of cell phones?

Dr. BUCHER. Yes, that is true.

Senator SPECTER. Would you recommend that?

Dr. BUCHER. I don't think we're in a position yet to make that recommendation.

Senator SPECTER. How about the use of ear phones to minimize risk?

Dr. BUCHER. I think that's a good idea.

Senator SPECTER. How would you do that specifically?

Dr. BUCHER. I understand that specific materials, such as the Bluetooth configuration, do reduce the exposure. That's my understanding.

Senator SPECTER. Would you pursue that question and inform the subcommittee so we can inform the public something more precise?

Dr. BUCHER. Yes.

[The information follows:]

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) provides recommendations on its Web site concerning use of cell phones by children. The FDA recommends limiting use of cell phones by children and, using a headset or the speakerphone option. The use of a headset or speakerphone may reduce exposure to the brain since the phone will not be held next to the ear; however, radiofrequency radiation exposure will still occur to whatever part of the "body is close to the phone. Also, some mobile communication devices emit lower levels of radiofrequency radiation than others (<http://www.ewg.org/cellphone-radiation>). The FDA acknowledges that some groups sponsored by other governments have advised that children be discouraged from using cell phones based on the precautionary principle.