

EPIDEMIOLOGY

The Possible Role of Radiofrequency Radiation in the Development of Uveal Melanoma.

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Abstract:

There are few epidemiologic studies dealing with electromagnetic radiation and uveal melanoma. The majority of these studies are exploratory and are based on job and industry titles only. We conducted a hospital-based and population-based case-control study of uveal melanoma and occupational exposures to different sources of electromagnetic radiation, including radiofrequency radiation. We then pooled these results. We interviewed a total of 118 female and male cases with uveal melanoma and 475 controls matching on sex, age, and study regions. Exposure to radiofrequency-transmitting devices was rated as (a) no radiofrequency radiation exposure, (b) possible exposure to mobile phones, or (c) probable/certain exposure to mobile phones. Exposures were rated independently by two of the authors who did not know case or control status. We used conditional logistic regression to calculate odds ratios (ORs) and 95% confidence intervals (95% CIs). We found an elevated risk for exposure to radiofrequency-transmitting devices (exposure to radio sets, OR = 3.0, 95% CI = 1.4-6.3; probable/certain exposure to mobile phones, OR = 4.2, 95% CI = 1.2-14.5). Other sources of electromagnetic radiation such as high-voltage lines, electrical machines, complex electrical environments, visual display terminals, or radar units were not associated with uveal melanoma. This is the first study describing an association between radiofrequency radiation exposure and uveal melanoma. Several methodologic limitations prevent our results from providing clear evidence on the hypothesized association.