



MOBILES & EYE CANCER

Are Mobile Phones Linked To Eye Cancer?

A group of researchers in Germany found that people who frequently use mobile phones are three times more likely to develop uveal melanoma- a cancer which grows in the iris and base of the retina of the eye. The scientists examined 118 patients already suffering from uveal melanoma, and investigated their mobile phone use history. They compared the results against a control group of 475 people.



Analysis of the results, which were published in January's *Epidemiology* journal, found that those with cancer had a much higher rate of mobile phone use.

However Dr Andreas Stang, who led the team of researchers, does caution that the study needs to be confirmed—a point backed by *Epidemiology*. "Given the small size of their study, the relatively crude exposure assessment, the absence of attention to UVR exposure or other possible confounding variables, and limited support in the literature, a cautious interpretation of their results is indicated," read an editorial accompanying the research.

Results from other studies that investigate mobile phones and cancer have been conflicting.

How could mobile phones cause melanoma in the eye? High levels of radiofrequency (RF) radiation can create enough heat to cause biological damage. But mobile phones emit low levels of RF energy. Some scientists theorize that the eye may be vulnerable to RF radiation even at low levels because the eye's limited blood supply prevents it from releasing heat easily.

Also, the radiation may not necessarily cause cancer, but may make people who are predisposed to cancer more susceptible.