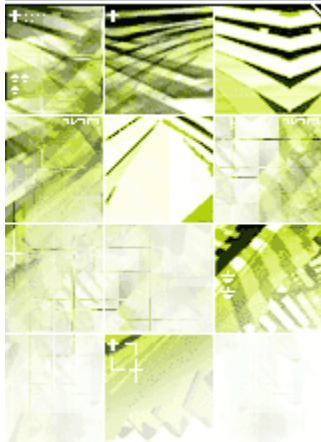




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Study: Cell phones-cell damage link

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Marc van Impe / Newscasters

According a Finnish study mobile phone radiation can cause changes in human cells that might affect the brain, Dariusz Leszczynski, the leader of the research team said on Wednesday. Leszczynski, who headed the two-year study and will present findings this week at a conference in Quebec, said more research was needed to determine the seriousness of the changes and their impact on the brain or the body.

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The study at Finland's Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK) found that exposure to radiation from mobile phones can cause increased activity in hundreds of proteins in human cells grown in a laboratory, he said.

"We know that there is some biological response. We can detect it with our very sensitive approaches, but we do not know whether it can have any physiological effects on the human brain or human body," Leszczynski said.

The study focused on changes in cells that line blood vessels and on whether such changes could weaken the functioning of the blood-brain barrier which prevents potentially harmful substances from entering the brain from the blood stream, Leszczynski said. "The study found that a protein linked to the functioning of the blood-brain barrier showed increased activity due to irradiation and pointed to a possibility that such activity could make the shield more permeable, he said. This increased protein activity might cause cells to shrink which would open tiny gaps ar between those cells through which some molecules could pass," he said.

Leszczynski declined to speculate on what kind of health risks that could pose, but said a French study indicated that headache, fatigue and sleep disorders could result.

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