



Seeking Sanctuary

How to Reduce Electromagnetic Radiation at Home

by Emily Courtney

Americans are attached to their gadgets, and the tech industry is all too happy to deliver the latest innovations to consumers that clamor for convenience, connection and unlimited mobility. Meanwhile, telecom companies are busy installing fifth-generation (5G) infrastructure designed to take the nation's communications revolution to a new level.

We love our smartphones and smart homes, and especially the relatively newfound freedom from wires and plugs that once tethered us to our electronics. But concerns about the price to be paid in increased health risks from electromagnetic fields (EMFs) generated by those devices has surged with the proliferation of silent, invisible waves of radiation that permeate every facet of modern life.

"The main health concerns include the breaking of DNA [bonds], leaks in the blood-brain barrier and loss of calcium from cellular membranes," says Ann Louise Gittleman, of Post Falls, Idaho, author of *Zapped: Why Your Cell Phone Shouldn't Be Your Alarm Clock* and *1,268 Ways to Outsmart the Hazards of Electronic Pollution*.

EMFs have cumulative and sometimes imperceptible biological effects, Gittleman notes—especially on the brain, heart, skin, lungs and central nervous system.

The World Health Organization has classified radiofrequency radiation (RF), a high-frequency EMF associated with many types of wireless technologies, as a Group 2B carcinogen. Radio, television, GPS and cell towers all emit RF, which has become the eye of a gathering storm regarding 5G as companies prepare to install millions of transmitters on lampposts and utility poles, along with standalone antennas nationwide, sending unprecedented levels of EMF into communities and neighborhoods.

"5G is especially hazardous, since the transmitters are placed closer to the populations served," says Samuel Milham, M.D., MPH, an Olympia, Washington, epidemiologist and author of *Dirty Electricity: Electrification and the Diseases of Civilization*.

Create a Safer Haven

With electromagnetic radiation blanketing the atmosphere from coast to coast, our homes may offer the only sanctuary from this particular form of pollution—providing we take some low-tech, commonsense steps to minimize household exposure to the health risk.

Find Some Distance

EMFs decrease with distance, so the farther away, the better. Switch to a battery-operated alarm clock, ditch the electric blanket, move the bed away from power outlets and keep wireless baby monitors six feet from beds.

Unplug Each Night

Disable Wi-Fi routers and remove all digital appliances and gadgets to make the bedroom a healing haven, says Gittleman.

Identify Overlooked Sources

“Almost all the homes I walk into have printers with wireless turned on, transmitting frequencies in the thousands of micro-watts per square meter,” says EMF expert Risa Suzuki, a certified building biology environmental consultant in Seattle. “Wireless boosters also constantly transmit radio frequency.”

Other overlooked household EMF sources include smart meters and household appliances both large and small, including hair dryers, electric shavers and cordless phones.

There are lots of solutions for reducing your exposure without ditching every electronic [device] in your house.

—Risa Suzuki,
EMF expert

Change Wireless Habits

Cell phones are prolific EMF producers, so if disconnecting isn't an option, use a speakerphone or an air tube headset, similar to a doctor's stethoscope, whenever possible, Gittleman advises in *Zapped*. Never carry the phone against the body when it's turned on.

For computers and tablets, switch to wired internet and turn on Wi-Fi only when necessary. Opt for a wired mouse, keyboard and other plugged-in accessories.

Shield With Caution

Although there are a variety of EMF-shielding products, experts warn against relying solely on them. “EMFs can bounce and deflect off surfaces, and materials have a certain threshold of what they can shield against,” says Suzuki. Do some research, ask questions and consult with an expert before making a purchase.

“It's easy to get overwhelmed when learning about EMFs, and many people feel totally helpless,” says Suzuki. “But there are lots of solutions for reducing your exposure without ditching every electronic [device] in your house. If you're willing to take action, then you can absolutely make a positive impact on your health.”

Emily Courtney is a freelance health and wellness writer and editor living in northern Colorado. Connect at EmilyCourtneyWrites@gmail.com.

Healthy Home, Healthy Body Combat EMFs

Modifying the use of electronics is just one piece of the puzzle in reducing the health impact of EMFs. Other healthy habits include:

Going green. Certain plants that absorb radiation and other indoor air pollution can be great additions to a healthy home environment. The betel leaf plant, stone lotus flower, spider plant, snake plant and cactus are all good options for helping to clean the air.

Fortifying health. A strong, nourished body provides greater protection from many health challenges, including EMF exposure. Ann Louise Gittleman suggests consuming superfoods, minerals and supplements that bolster health, such as artichokes, blueberries, rosemary, turmeric, melatonin, whey protein powder and milk thistle.

Earthing. Physically connecting with the earth enables a transfer of electrons into the body, which helps to neutralize the free radicals that build up from EMF exposure. “Go out in nature as much as possible to discharge energies,” says Gittleman. The easiest way to practice earthing is walking barefoot outside.

Accessorizing. Many experts, including Gittleman, recommend wearing jewelry made of shungite, a black mineraloid composed almost entirely of carbon that can absorb harmful radiation from EMFs.

For more information on EMFs and public health, go to:

- National Cancer Institute
Tinyurl.com/ElectromagneticFieldsAndCancer
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Tinyurl.com/ElectricAndMagneticFields

