

Convenience may be causing people to get sick

Electromagnetic hypersensitivity is a growing health concern



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BY MARIA TZAVARAS

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Modern technology makes our lives convenient and efficient, but is it also making us sick? Electromagnetic fields, or EMFs, are all around us, emitted from items in our home, work and outside environments. Whether it's outside power lines, home electrical wiring or appliances big and small, if it uses electricity, it's giving off EMFs.

That being said, it's inevitable we are all going to be exposed to EMFs so the question becomes what exactly does that mean for our health?

Electromagnetic hypersensitivity is a growing health concern and, according to Dr. Howard Fisher, a Toronto chiropractor and author of *The Invisible Threat, The Risks Associated with EMFs*, it can be attributed to several health disorders.

Studies have confirmed these disorders include fatigue, sleep disturbances, loss of mental attention, headaches, depression, heart palpitations, memory problems and burning and tingling sensations in the head and extremities.

Fisher also said EMFs have been proven to have effects on neurological tissues, contributing to nerve degenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease. Whether it causes or simply exacerbates symptoms, Fisher said he can't say, but if this is true, why hasn't the public heard more about it?

Health Canada, while recognizing EMFs exist, said it does not feel they negatively impact the health of Canadians.

"Health Canada has no scientific reason to consider the use of wireless communications devices, such as cellphones, BlackBerries, wireless laptop computers and their supporting infrastructure, (are) dangerous to the health of the Canadian public," said the official statement from the health organization. "The World Health Organization has recently confirmed this as well."

Renee Bergeron, media relations officer for Health Canada, said she gets calls on a weekly basis from concerned citizens regarding electromagnetic sensitivities, mainly regarding cellphones. Currently Bergeron said there's no concrete scientific evidence to back up those concerns. "We have a whole team of people working in the radiation protection program area; that's what they do," she said.

However, Fisher said he strongly believes in the negative health effects attributed to EMFs and has known about it since the early '80s.

Kevin Byrne, a former sufferer, also said the effects are real.

Three years ago, Byrne moved into a house and did renovations, including installing new lighting complete with 15 compact fluorescent lights and three dimmer switches. Over the next few months, Byrne noticed he was feeling overall unwellness.

"I developed arthritic-like pain. I was very sore and my joints hurt, especially my hips, and I wasn't sleeping well," he said.

He went to the doctor for a checkup, but everything was normal. It wasn't until he was visiting a neighbour, an environmental engineer, that there was some light shed on his situation. The neighbour was using a Stetzer meter, developed to measure dirty electricity.

Dirty electricity is caused by energy-saving devices such as power bars and compact fluorescent light bulbs. To achieve the lower voltage, electricity is chopped up, allowing it to move slower and achieve energy efficiency. As a result, electricity spews outward and goes back through the wiring in your home, contaminating everything that is plugged in.

After Byrne took the meter home to his house, he found high levels of dirty electricity. "Your electricity, when it's clean, there's nothing fundamentally wrong with it, but when it's contaminated ... it's got radiation spewing off of it," Byrne said.

Historically, Fisher said people have been aware of the effects of EMFs since the 1950s. However, it remains a controversial topic with many unknowns.

"What the medical world isn't aware of we don't know how much of the symptoms that they see in practice on a regular basis is due to electromagnetic field effects or actual pathologies," Fisher said. That being said, other countries such as Sweden and Australia recognize this; so why not Canada?

"When you test anything, like drugs, products or whatever, sometimes you have to look at how big the studies are, how long did they test them for, what are the variables, so we have to accumulate a lot of studies and we have to see a pattern before we can verify it," Bergeron said.

Visit www.dirtyelectricity.ca to learn more about how you can avoid EMF exposure.

www.beperkdestraling.org