# Young Children's Brains Absorb More Radiation from Cell Phones

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The brains of young children absorb twice as much as RF energy from a cell phone as those of adults, according to a set of new calculations carried out by Joe Wiart's research group at France Telecom in the suburbs of Paris.

"[Our] analysis confirms that peripheral brain tissues of children seem to be higher exposed than the peripheral brain tissue of adults," Wiart concludes in a paper that appears in the July 7 issue of *Physics in Medicine and Biology.* "Children are not simply small adults." Wiart explained in an interview with *Microwave News.* "Their skin and their skulls are thinner than those of adults, and their ears are smaller too," he said. "Given these differences, the higher SAR for children is not surprising,"

These new findings apply to children who are eight years old or younger. Above the age of eight, the SARs in children are much like those of adults, according to Wiart.

"I agree with Joe," said Niels Kuster, the director of the IT'IS Foundation in Zurich. A team led by Kuster and Andreas Christ recently completed a project for the German Federal Office of Radiation Protection (BfS), which like Wiart, found that regions of the brains of young children can have exposures that are twice those of adults —or even higher.

Even more striking, Kuster and Christ concluded that the "exposure of the bone marrow of children can exceed that of adults by about a factor of ten." They also report that children's eyes are more highly exposed that those of adults.

Whether or not children are at a greater health risk than adults has been debated since at least the year 2000, when a U.K. panel chaired by Sir William Stewart advised that parents limit their children's use of mobile phones. Since then, other government

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groups, especially those in France and Germany, have issued similar precautionary recommendations.

The mobile phone industry has long disputed the possibility that children are at any greater risk. For instance, earlier this year after the French Ministry of Health reiterated concerns over children's use of cell phones, the MMF, an industry lobby group, issued an advisory stating that cell phones do not present health risks to any users "regardless of age."

The MMF has relied heavily on statements issued by the WHO's EMF Project in Geneva, and the Health Council of the Netherlands. For instance, in a paper published in 2004, the Health Council concluded that: "There is no convincing scientific data to assume a difference in the absorption of electromagnetic energy in heads of children and adults."

*France, Joe Wiart, children, France Telecom, Niels Kuster, Andreas Christ, WHO, EMF Project, Health Council of the Netherlands, children/phones,*

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