

# MOBILE PHONES: SOME OBSERVATIONS

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Read the following text and answer the questions below it.

## MOBILE PHONES: SAFETY AND HEALTH

Mobile phone use while driving is common but controversial. Being distracted while operating a motor vehicle has been shown to increase the risk of accident. Because of this, many jurisdictions prohibit the use of mobile phones while driving. Egypt, Israel, Japan, Portugal and Singapore *ban* both *handheld* and *hands-free* use of a mobile phone; others – including the UK, France and many U.S. states – ban handheld phone use only, allowing hands-free use.

*Due to* the increasing complexity of mobile phones, they are often more like mobile computers in their available uses. This has introduced additional difficulties for law enforcement officials in distinguishing one usage from another as drivers use their devices. This is more *apparent* in those countries which ban both handheld and hands-free usage, rather than those who have banned handheld use only, as officials cannot easily tell which function of the mobile phone is being used simply by looking at the driver. This can lead to drivers being stopped for using their device illegally on a phone call when, in fact, they were using the device for a legal purpose such as the phone's incorporated controls for car stereo or satnavigator.

A recently published study has reviewed the incidence of mobile phone use while cycling and its effects on behavior and safety.

## IN SCHOOLS

Some schools limit or restrict the use of mobile phones. Schools set restrictions on the use of mobile phones because of the use of cell phones for *cheating* on tests, *harassment* and bullying, causing threats to the schools security, distractions to the students and facilitating gossip and other social activity in school. Many mobile phones are banned in school *locker room* facilities, *public restrooms* and swimming pools due to the built-in cameras that most phones now *feature*.

## HEALTH

The effect mobile phone radiation has on human health is the subject of recent interest and study, as a result of the enormous increase in mobile phone usage *throughout* the world. Mobile phones use electromagnetic radiation in the microwave range, which some believe may be *harmful* to human health. A large body of research exists, both epidemiological and experimental, in non-human animals and in humans, of which the majority shows no definite causative relationship between exposure to mobile phones and harmful biological effects in humans. This is often paraphrased simply as the balance of evidence showing no harm to humans from mobile phones, although a significant number of individual studies do suggest such a relationship or are inconclusive. Other digital wireless systems, such as data communication networks, produce similar radiation.

On 31 May 2011, the World Health Organization stated that mobile phone use may possibly represent a long-term health risk, classifying mobile phone radiation as “possibly carcinogenic to humans” after a team of scientists reviewed studies on cell phone safety. Mobile phones are in category 2B, which ranks it alongside Coffee and other possibly carcinogenic substances.

At least some recent studies have found an association between cell phone use and certain kinds of brain and salivary gland tumors. Lennart Hardell and other authors of a 2009 meta-analysis of 11 studies from peer-reviewed journals concluded that cell phone usage for at least ten years “approximately doubles the risk of being diagnosed with a brain tumor on the same (‘ipsilateral’) side of the head as that preferred for cell phone use.”

One study of past cell phone use cited in the report showed a “40% increased risk for gliomas (brain cancer) in the highest category of heavy users (reported average: 30 minutes per day over a 10-year period).” This is a reversal from their prior position that cancer was unlikely to be caused by cellular phones or their base stations and that reviews had found no convincing evidence for other health effects. Certain countries, including France, have warned against the use of cell phones especially by minors due to health risk uncertainties. However, a study published on 24 March 2012 in the British Medical Journal questioned these estimates, because the increase in brain cancers has not paralleled the increase in mobile phone use.

- a. Is mobile phone use while driving allowed in every country in the world?
- b. If not, why?
- c. Is hands-free use always banned?
- d. What new issue have “mobile phones becoming like mobile computers” introduced?
- e. Is mobile phone use while cycling safe?
- f. Do schools limit or restrict the use of mobile phones?
- g. Why do schools limit or restrict the use of mobile phones?
- h. What effect does mobile phone radiation have on human health?
- i. Are there any risks of getting brain cancer?

## 2 Match the terms in *italics* in the text with their Italian equivalents.

- |                    |                          |                                 |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. to ban          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. <i>bagno pubblico</i>        |
| b. handheld        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. <i>in tutto, dappertutto</i> |
| c. hands-free      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. <i>evidente</i>              |
| d. due to          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. <i>spogliatoio</i>           |
| e. apparent        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. <i>presentare</i>            |
| f. to cheat        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. <i>dannoso</i>               |
| g. harassment      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. <i>a mani libere</i>         |
| h. locker room     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. <i>molestie</i>              |
| i. public restroom | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. <i>vietare</i>               |
| j. to feature      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. <i>palmare</i>              |
| k. throughout      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. <i>a causa di</i>           |
| l. harmful         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. <i>barare</i>               |

## 3 This text contains 680 words, shorten it to 300.

- Better to be a geek than an idiot.
- I'm not anti-social; I'm just not user-friendly.

