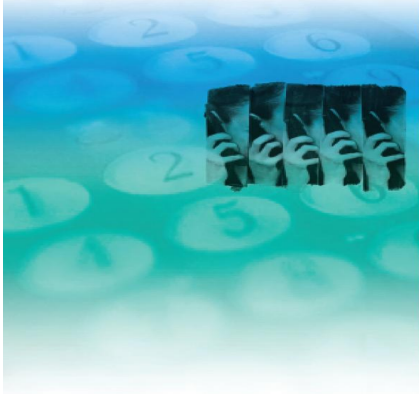




Mobile phones and Health



Children and young people under 16

Mobile phones are very popular with young people and have obvious attractions for personal security and keeping in touch with others. Parents and young people should make their own informed choices about the use of mobile phones. The current balance of evidence does not show health problems caused by using mobile phones. However the research does show that using mobile phones affects brain activity. There are also significant gaps in our scientific knowledge. Because the head and nervous system are still developing into the teenage years, the expert group considered that if there are any unrecognised health risks from mobile phone use, then children and young people might be more vulnerable than adults.



The expert group has therefore recommended that in line with a precautionary approach, the widespread use of mobile phones by children (under the age of 16) should be discouraged for non-essential calls.

In the light of this recommendation the UK Chief Medical Officers strongly advise that where children and young people do use mobile phones, they should be encouraged to:

- use mobile phones for essential purposes only
- keep all calls short - talking for long periods prolongs exposure and should be discouraged

The UK CMOs recommend that if parents want to avoid their children being subject to any possible risk that might be identified in the future, the way to do so is to exercise their choice not to let their children use mobile phones.

The UK Chief Medical Officers strongly advise that children and teenagers under 16 should not use mobile phones except for short essential calls.

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