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Mobile Phone Use and the Risk for Malignant Brain Tumors: A Case-Control Study on Deceased Cases and Controls.

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Abstract

We investigated the use of mobile or cordless phones and the risk for malignant brain tumors in a group of deceased cases. Most previous studies have either left out deceased cases of brain tumors or matched them to living controls and therefore a study matching deceased cases to deceased controls is warranted. Recall error is one issue since it has been claimed that increased risks reported in some studies could be due to cases blaming mobile phones as a cause of the disease. This should be of less importance for deceased cases and if cancer controls are used. In this study brain tumor cases aged 20-80 years diagnosed during 1997-2003 that had died before inclusion in our previous studies on the same topic were included. Two control groups were used: one with controls that had died from another type of cancer than brain tumor and one with controls that had died from other diseases. Exposure was assessed by a questionnaire sent to the next-of-kin for both cases and controls. Replies were obtained for 346 (75%) cases, 343 (74%) cancer controls and 276 (60%) controls with other diseases. Use of mobile phones gave an increased risk, highest in the >10 years' latency group yielding odds ratio (OR) = 2.4, and 95% confidence interval (CI) = 1.4-4.1. The risk increased with cumulative number of lifetime hours for use, and was highest in the >2,000 h group (OR = 3.4, 95% CI = 1.6-7.1). No clear association was found for use of cordless phones, although OR = 1.7, 95% CI = 0.8-3.4 was found in the group with >2,000 h of cumulative use. This investigation confirmed our previous results of an association between mobile phone use and malignant brain tumors. Copyright © 2010 S. Karger AG, Basel.

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