



## New Sleep Study

A conference abstract of a new study, funded by the Mobile Manufacturers Forum, has been made available online.<sup>1</sup> The study, looking into the possible effects of exposure to radiofrequency (RF) energy and sleep, claims that exposure to RF energy has an effect on the quality of sleep.

As always, we emphasize that all individual studies need to be seen in light of the total research effort into mobile phone safety.

When you take a step back and look at the weight of scientific evidence, as several independent organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) have done, the only conclusion you could draw is that there is no scientific reason for concern about the safety of mobile phones.

The WHO's fact sheet on radio frequency emissions says:

*None of the recent reviews have concluded that exposure to the RF (radio frequency) fields from mobile phones and their base stations cause any adverse health consequences.*

As mentioned, the claims are made in a conference abstract that has yet to be published in a scientific journal.

It should be noted that the conference abstract is being promoted by a PR agency on behalf of Exradia who sells replacement batteries that claim to emit 'protective' RF fields. Monument PR promoted the abstract in a press release on behalf of Exradia who have an interest in creating concern about mobile phones because these concerns help sell their products.<sup>2</sup>

Importantly, the conference abstract should not be misinterpreted to show that mobile phones are having a negative health effect on their users.

The abstract clearly states that a lot of additional data from the study is still to be analyzed, including whether there are, in fact, any health implications for mobile phone users. The abstract authors state:

*Additional self-reported findings, biochemical, performance and electrophysiological data are currently being analyzed. Possible health implications from the findings will also be further explored.*

and

*We will also attempt to assess the possible clinical relevance of the observed findings.*

Consistent with what we have said with other studies, we should be cautious about interpreting the results from any individual or single study. Other studies in this field have, for example, not found any significant effects on latter sleep stages or sleep parameters.

For example, Loughran et al from Swinburne University in Melbourne, Australia, initially found decreased latency to REM sleep with a 30 minute exposure prior to sleep, and an increase in

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<sup>1</sup> <http://piers.mit.edu/piersonline/piers.php?volume=3&number=7&page=1148>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.responsesource.com/releases/rel\\_display.php?relid=36228&hilite=](http://www.responsesource.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=36228&hilite=)

alpha power of the EEG in the first 30 minutes of sleep. But in a follow up study they did not find any effect in subsequent sleep stages or other sleep parameters.

The Loughran study included 50 participants and so is of a similar power to this particular study.<sup>3</sup>

*January 2008*

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<sup>3</sup> Loughran, S.P., Wood, A.W., Barton, J.M., Croft, R.J., Thompson, B., Stough, C. (2005) The effect of electromagnetic fields emitted by mobile phones on human sleep. *Neuroreport* 16.