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Will You Be one of the 15,000 That Are Killed By CT Scans Next Year?

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CT scans deliver far more radiation than has been believed, and may contribute to 29,000 new cancers each year, along with 14,500 deaths.

One study found that people may be exposed to up to four times as much radiation as estimated by earlier studies. While previous studies relied on dummies equipped with sensors, authors of the new paper studied more than 1,000 patients at four hospitals.

Based on their measurements, a patient could get as much radiation from one CT scan as 74 mammograms or 442 chest X-rays.

Young people are at highest risk from excess radiation, partly because they have many years ahead of them in which cancers could develop. Among 20-year-old women who get one coronary angiogram, a CT scan of the heart, one in 150 will develop cancer related to the procedure.

Dr. Mercola's Comments:

I've been warning about the extreme dangers of CT scans for nearly a decade now.

It's incredible to me that even with long-standing, irrefutable proof of the connection between CT scans and a high incidence of cancer, so many of these tests are still being ordered on unsuspecting patients. Estimates are that only seven percent of patients are informed of the risks of their CT scans.

This is another example of why you must be your own advocate when you visit your doctor or other health care provider.

Arm yourself with information about the risks that accompany medical tests, treatments and prescription drugs. Become a smart consumer of your health care options, rather than an unfortunate victim of dangerous and unnecessary procedures and medications.

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The number of CT scans doubled between 1997 and 2006, according to a study by the University of California, San Francisco.

Even more startling: According to a report in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM), in 1980, three million CT scans were performed in the U.S. By 2006, the number had exceeded 62 million, including four million on children.

One reason for the increase is many doctors have purchased their own imaging equipment for their practices. This adds a financial incentive into the mix and sets the stage for overuse of the technology.

Another reason for the increase is a trend toward commercially advertised full-body CT scans to "find everything wrong with you." Consumers with extra cash laying around (in excess of \$1,000 in most cases) are being encouraged to undergo a full-body scan as a preventive measure.

Three Million Excess Cancers!!

The truth is these scans are performed by commercial enterprises, and the quality of the tests is so poor as to render the results virtually useless.

This would be less troubling if the CT scan was a harmless imaging technique. But with radiation levels 100 times what you receive from a conventional chest x-ray, this is not a test to undergo for screening purposes or "just because."

There are circumstances in which a CT scan is truly your best option due to your condition, but whenever possible, another less dangerous scanning technology, like an MRI which does not use ionizing radiation, should be used. MRI's do not involve the use of x-rays, but the powerful magnetic field of the scanner may present another set of health risks.

The NEJM study estimated that overuse of CT scans may cause up to three million excess cancers in the next two or three decades. David Brenner of Columbia University, lead author of the study, estimates that a third of all CT scans are medically unnecessary.

Brenner told *USA Today*, "*Virtually anyone who presents in the emergency room with pain in the belly or a chronic headache will automatically get a CT scan. Is that justified?*"

Riskier Still for Kids and Brain Scan Patients

If your child undergoes a CT scan, chances are the equipment will be calibrated for an adult. This means your child could absorb two to six times more radiation than needed to produce a clear image. This is unconscionable, and could result in radiation-induced cancer later in life.

Over 200 unsuspecting patients who underwent a specific type of CT brain scan at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles received eight to 10 times the normal dose of radiation due to an incorrectly programmed machine.

The overdose wasn't discovered for 18 months and only came to light after a patient reported losing patches of hair following a CT scan.

On the whole, diagnostic imaging tests have increased Americans' average radiation exposure seven times since 1980. Increased exposure leads to increased cancer risk.

The Simple Truth: Radiation Damages Your Body

X-rays and other classes of ionizing radiation, like CT scans, are a proven cause of virtually all types of mutations -- especially structural chromosomal mutations. Radiation also causes genomic instability, often a characteristic of the most aggressive cancers.

Further, cells cannot correctly repair every type of complex genetic damage induced by ionizing radiation, and sometimes cells cannot repair such damage at all.

Unlike some other mutagens, ionizing radiation has access to the genetic molecules of every internal organ, if the organ is within the x-ray beam. Within such organs, even a single high-speed high-energy electron, set into motion by an x-ray photon, has a chance of inducing the types of damage that defy repair. That is why there is no risk-free dose-level when it comes to ionizing radiation.

And when such mutations are not cell-lethal, they endure and accumulate with each additional exposure to x-rays or other ionizing radiation.

Evidence strongly indicates that over half the deaths from cancer and heart disease may be x-ray-induced.

Mammography is another example of overused, risky imaging technology.

A mammogram exposes your body to radiation that can be 1,000 times greater than that from a chest x-ray. Mammography compresses your breasts tightly, which is not only painful for most women but can actually spread dangerous cancer cells, should they exist.

Updated guidelines now call for women under 50 to forego routine screening mammography. This is a small step in the right direction, however, there is a far better option.

A 100% Safe Imaging Technology

I highly recommend thermography for breast screening in particular, as well as other types of imaging.

Thermographic screening is entirely safe, non-invasive, and brilliantly simple. This technology measures the radiation of infrared heat from your body and translates the information into anatomical images.

There is no pressure or compression of your breasts, and no radiation. This imaging system can detect signs of breast cancer up to 10 years before either a mammogram or a physical exam.

If your doctor or other health care provider recommends a CT scan, mammogram or other imaging technique as either a screening tool or to diagnose a physical complaint, I strongly encourage you to explore all your options before agreeing to be radiated.

Don't trade your good health or a minor complaint for an increased risk of x-ray-induced cancer in the future.

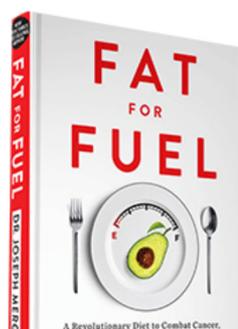
Fat for Fuel – My New Book to Help Fight Cancer

Arriving in May, the strategies I present in my newest book, **Fat for Fuel**, are just too important for your health and well-being to set aside and “wait until the timing feels right.” You’re growing older each day. Your body is producing fewer mitochondria, so that puts you at a disadvantage right from the gate. Time really may not be on your side.

And even if you haven’t yet been diagnosed with cancer, you likely have cancer cells in your body right now. Just about everyone has at least some. It’s up to your body as to whether they’ll survive or succumb. I believe **Fat for Fuel** gives you your best fighting chance against cancer or any other chronic disease by repairing and renewing your mitochondria.

Why wait when you can start making powerful changes now in your mitochondrial health? Changes that will have a ripple effect throughout your entire body. When you place your order today, I’m going to give you **six FREE “thank-you” gifts**.

1. **Your very own sneak preview of Fat for Fuel** – Books will be mailed starting May 16th, but you won’t need to wait until yours arrives to get started. Begin reading my new book right away with your free sneak preview!
2. **20% OFF Cronometer Gold** – Most experts agree that Cronometer is the best online nutrient tracker. It is free to all users and is invaluable for tracking your health progress.
3. **A Healthy Recipe Guide** – A complete plan of healthy mouthwatering meals compiled by myself and an assortment of nutritional experts to help you burn fat for fuel.
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5. **Online copy of my magazine** – A free digital copy of my online magazine. It provides my tips and recommendations to optimize your health and nutrition.
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