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Lethal Danger of CT Scans

August 2010

By William Faloon

Medical Radiation and Today's Breast Cancer Epidemic

Breast cancer incidence has sharply increased since the year 1960. This correlates with an exponential increase in the use of medical X-rays.

The most recently released data indicate that as many as 2,000 excess cases of breast cancer will develop as a result of CT scans performed in the year 2007 alone!³⁸

Dr. John Gofman, however, knew this nearly 40 years earlier. In 1970, Gofman and his colleague Arthur Tamplin wrote to *The Lancet*³⁹ expressing their concern that the amount of radiation needed to double the risk of breast cancer was very low. Young women were especially vulnerable, he said, and the greater the radiation exposure, the greater the risk. The evidence was there that radiation exposure could significantly increase the risk of breast cancer, but few were following up on this critical research.

In a lecture given at a meeting held by the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1994, Dr. Gofman presented his findings showing that there was increased breast cancer in Japanese women who survived the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.⁴⁰⁻⁴² Studies on mice and guinea pigs showed that cancer-resistant animals developed breast cancer if given repeated doses of radiation.⁴³ But the most damning research about breast cancer and radiation was preliminary data from young women who had undergone repeated fluoroscopies as part of their tuberculosis treatment from 1930-1950. These women were developing breast cancer at more than double the expected rate.⁴⁴⁻⁴⁸

In preparing for the breast cancer talk, Gofman began looking into how many cases of breast cancer in America might be caused by radiation exposure. His first estimate was that 35% of all breast cancer cases wouldn't exist had the women not been exposed to medical radiation. His revised estimate, published a year later, was 75%.⁴⁹ Gofman paid particular attention to such exposures during years 1920-1960 because those exposures would contribute to breast cancer rates for at least the next 45 years. Gofman did not believe these exposures were the only cause of the women's cancers, but he believed they played a major role in making them come about.



According to Gofman, the lag time between radiation exposure and cancer is variable. Data shows that the average lag time between radiation exposure from the American raids on Japan and the appearance of breast cancer in Japanese women was about 12 years.⁴¹ However, it can occur sooner or later. Radiation has greater carcinogenic effects on younger people. Data from the Japanese studies show that if a woman was 20 years old or younger when exposed to the radiation, she had a **13-fold** elevated risk of breast cancer occurring by the time she was 35 (assuming 1 Sievert of radiation).⁵⁰ Some studies put the risk for older women at double. Regarding children, it has been stated that 10 rads administered to a fetus is enough to produce all forms of childhood cancer, whereas the same amount in an adult would not have that effect ⁵¹⁻⁵⁴

Critics were unable to demonstrate that Gofman's 75% radiation-induced breast cancer figure was wrong. They could challenge it using different assumptions, but as Gofman puts it, *"they were unable to show any basis for thinking that their assumptions were more likely to be right than our assumptions."* (Editor's note: Human radiation research is based necessarily on assumptions because human experiments cannot be done.)

The Other Side of the Story

While the radiation emitted from CT scans will cause hundreds of thousands of cancer cases and an untold number of heart attacks and strokes, this does not mean that they should be banned.

You may remember the term *"exploratory surgery"* to describe hospital operations that used to be done to diagnose a disease. With the advent of imaging devices like CT scanners, these risky hospital procedures have become a virtual relic of the past.

If a patient suffers an acute stroke, an emergency CT scan can determine whether it is an *ischemic* (blocked artery) stroke or *hemorrhagic* (blood vessel bleed) stroke. If an ischemic stroke is quickly diagnosed and treated with a clot-busting drug like TPA (tissue plasminogen activator), brain damage can be mitigated or eliminated. A hemorrhagic stroke, on the other hand, might require immediate surgery to repair the broken blood vessel. CT scans can also help doctors ascertain areas of trauma in severe accidents.

Stroke or accident victims might not have time for **magnetic resonance imaging** (MRI) or **magnetic resonance angiography** and therefore require an immediate CT scan.

While **Life Extension** recommends that **magnetic resonance imaging** or **ultrasound** diagnostics be used in place of X-rays whenever possible, the following medical problems may require that a CT scan be performed as opposed to MRI:

- **Patient has a cardiac pacemaker;**
- **Patient has an implantable cardiac defibrillator;**
- **Patient has a metallic foreign body near or in their eye;**
- **Patient has an aneurysm clip on one of the delicate blood vessels in the brain;**
- **Patient has metallic orthopedic hardware such as metal screws or plates to hold bone(s) together.**

In general, MRI offers better contrast resolution and better assessment of soft tissue pathology like tumors, ligaments, and tendons. MRI also offers the ability to change the reference plan for imaging without needing to move the patient. CT scan, in comparison, is better than MRI at evaluation of bony lesions (e.g., bone metastasis) and bone fractures.

If a CT scan is absolutely necessary, ask that the intensity be modulated so the least amount of radiation needed to obtain an image is used.

Cancer patients can often benefit from whole body PET (positron emission tomography) scans whereby metastatic lesions can be detected by virtue of the "hot spots" that their *hypermetabolic* activity generates. The amount of radiation emitted in PET scans (or PET CT scans) is similar to a typical CT scan. While avoiding needless radiation is important

for otherwise healthy people, cancer patients can benefit from the data gathered from PET scans by virtue of identifying the existence and location of metastatic disease before symptoms manifest.

My Personal Experience with Needless Radiation Exposure

Crooked doctors exposed me to an enormous amount of needless radiation at an early age. Unless the nutrients I take (like high-dose vitamin D) *reverse* the radiation-induced gene mutations, I will be vulnerable to a host of cancers and heart disease for the rest of my life.

As you have read, medical X-rays not only damage genes that regulate cellular proliferation (thereby increasing cancer risk), but they also damage the inner lining of the arteries (the endothelium) thereby increasing cardiovascular risk.



When I was age **27**, I developed some heart palpitations. Had I known a competent cardiologist at the time, my **mitral valve prolapse** would have been diagnosed by a low-cost **ultrasound** test.

Instead, I was ordered to check into the hospital where my health insurance company was financially raped in every way imaginable. The cardiologist insisted that I undergo an **angiogram**, a procedure that involved threading a catheter into my heart to evaluate my arteries and valves. A continuous X-ray is what guided the catheter going into my heart.

The cost in today's dollars for the needless angiogram I endured is over **\$20,000**. Hospital fees add to this outrageous number.

If you become infuriated when your insurance company refuses to pay for a drug or diagnostic procedure your doctor prescribes, remember that for decades, the conventional medical establishment *defrauded* health insurance companies by ordering all kinds of unnecessary, expensive tests. Insurance companies have become so defensive today that they often deny patients necessary diagnostics such as **magnetic resonance imaging** (MRI) that do not emit ionizing radiation.

I hope that anyone reading this article has acquired the information and fortitude to say no the next time their doctor tries to perform an unnecessary X-ray or CT scan.

The Value of Information

When a cardiologist told me that I needed an angiogram, there was no one to turn to for guidance. Conventional medicine ruled in that era, and doctors were seldom challenged. If I could have just called an organization like the **Life Extension Foundation®** back then, I would have been told that the **ultrasound** diagnostic procedure was all I needed.

As a **Life Extension member**, you are armed with cutting-edge information that can enable you to make medical choices based on hard science—not on antiquated dogma or financial bias.

While some medical X-rays are unavoidable, you should inquire as to whether an ultrasound, MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), or MRA (magnetic resonance angiography) might provide alternative imaging. You might also question whether a particular X-ray is necessary, as doctors often prescribe them merely to protect themselves from liability. This may be good for doctors as it confirms their diagnosis, but bad for you as your DNA can sustain irreversible damage.



Heart scans, CT scans, whole- body scans, PET scans, and virtual colonoscopies all emit tremendous amounts of radiation and should not be used for routine screening.

I remain dedicated to educating the public to avoid unnecessary CT scans and medical X-rays. Low-cost ultrasounds can sometimes substitute, whereas higher-cost MRIs can sometimes yield more detailed images. **Blood tests** can provide a better indicator of coronary artery disease risk than heart CT scans, while simultaneously identifying *correctable* risk factors such as elevated LDL, triglycerides, glucose, and C-reactive protein.

In this month's issue, we discuss ways of protecting one's DNA against the carcinogenic and atherogenic effects of ionizing radiation in case a CT scan or medical X-ray is required.

For longer life,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Faloon'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

William Faloon

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