

X-Ray Mutations

by Raymond Francis

Astonishing new information about the damaging health effects of medical x-rays is the subject of a new book, *Radiation from Medical Procedures*, by John Gofman, M.D., Ph.D. Both a medical doctor and a nuclear physicist, Dr. Gofman is one of the world's leading experts in radiation damage. Dr. Gofman's evidence suggests that: Medical x-rays are responsible for an estimated 60 percent of all cancer deaths and 70 percent of all deaths from Ischemic Heart Disease (blockage of blood vessels).

To understand why x-rays are such a serious threat to our health, we must understand genes and mutations. Similar to the operating system of a computer, genes are the blueprints for the structure and function of our bodies. Just as a "glitch" in computer software can disable a computer, a glitch in a cell's genetic programming can cause serious problems, including cancer. Such a cellular "glitch" is referred to as a mutation (a change from the original genetic code).

For many years, studies have linked radiation exposure with most varieties of human cancers. Coming as a big surprise, Dr. Gofman's findings show that x-rays contribute to heart disease. What happens is this: x-rays cause mutations in the smooth muscle cells of the arteries, which makes the cells dystoreunfunctional and unable to process lipoproteins correctly. This in turn causes chronic inflammation of the arterial tissue, resulting in the accumulation of atherosclerotic plaque. This plaque eventually blocks the artery, resulting in heart attacks and strokes.

When one contemplates the implications of Dr. Gofman's conclusions, some alarming realities present themselves. First, medical radiation appears to be one of the principal causes of cancer and heart disease in America. Next, the amount of people who are affected is enormous. M.D.s order about 300 million x-rays per year and dentists order another 100 million—perhaps helping to explain our increasing rates of cancer and other chronic diseases. Next, if one combines America's annual deaths from medical errors and prescription drugs (about 425,000) with the projected deaths from medical x-rays (about 750,000), this adds up to well over one million deaths per year being caused by our modern medical establishment. Thus, modern medicine would become the single largest cause of death in America.

Of course, diagnostic x-rays can be of benefit in certain situations, which is why they are still used—if overused. Dr. Gofman recommends that the total number of x-rays and the radiation dose of each be reduced. He believes that the number of x-rays could be cut by more than half without any loss of useful information. (Other researchers have estimated that up to 90 percent could be eliminated with no loss of useful data.) In addition, Dr. Gofman points out that x-rays are not the sole cause of cancer and heart disease. Rather, x-rays act as necessary co-factors in these diseases. That is, they are not the only factor involved in producing these diseases, but the disease will not happen without the x-ray.

What to do? To minimize your risk from x-rays, you must optimize your DNA repair and minimize free radical oxidative damage. This is accomplished by optimizing your nutrition, minimizing your toxic exposures, minimizing stress, and getting adequate amounts of exercise, natural light, and sleep. You must also avoid x-rays as much as possible. Learn to say no to x-rays. Ask yourself and your doctor, "Is this particular x-ray *absolutely* necessary?" Keep in mind that up to 90 percent of x-rays are unnecessary and are done for legal and economic reasons. Remember that health is a choice. It is up to you to choose it. There is an appropriate time and place for using x-rays, so make informed choices.

If nothing else will get you to avoid x-rays, then consider this: X-rays bombard the atoms that make up your cells, "kicking" electrons out of their normal orbits and sending them flying at high speeds through your body's cells. These high-speed electrons crash into molecules that make up the genetic material in human cells and subject them to a uniquely violent kind of damage—mayhem that injures the genes so that they cannot be perfectly repaired (or even repaired at all). Put simply, exposure to x-rays can change the genetic coding of your cells, resulting in mutations that cause serious problems like cancer and heart disease. Do not expose yourself to x-rays unless absolutely necessary.

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