

Give Your... **CELL PHONE** a Checkup

When it comes to safety, do you need a wake-up call? Protect yourself with these quick tips.

➔ Disinfect it

Believe it or not, research shows that the average cell phone contains about 10 times more germs than a toilet seat. Clean your device daily with GoSwype (\$2; goswype.com), a reusable microfiber cloth that sanitizes touch screens.

➔ Avoid risks

There's no such thing as safe texting or talking on the phone behind the wheel, even if you employ a hands-free device. "We don't have the brain power to do these complicated tasks simultaneously," says Robert Rosenberger, Ph.D., an assistant professor at Georgia Institute of Technology, who studies distracted driving. "The phone pulls our minds off the road and into the

conversation." Indeed, a new report from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that using a headset is just as dangerous as gabbing without one; either way, your reaction time slows, increasing the chance of missing signs, pedestrians, and other cars.

➔ Shield yourself

Whether there's a connection between cell phones and increased cancer risk is still up for debate, but taking a few precautions can't hurt. For starters, forget stashing one in your sports bra or pants pocket, says Devra Davis, Ph.D., president of the Environmental Health Trust. "Keep it at least an inch from your body," she says. (Using earphones or a headset while talking will help protect your head.) Another good idea: Invest

in a rubber or plastic case, since metal ones may increase radiation. Or try the Pong Case (from \$50; pongresearch.com), which redirects emissions away from your body via an embedded antenna.

You should also avoid making calls when the battery is low, the signal is weak (say, in elevators), or when traveling at high speeds, like in a car or train; your phone has to work harder in these situations, so it emits more radiation. Anytime service is spotty, put it on airplane mode so it's not searching for a signal.

➔ **Add ICE** First responders typically look for an emergency contact on your phone, so include your go-to person's name and number under "ICE" (in case of emergency) in your contact list.



Make Your Smartphone Smarter Download this trio of free apps.

1 REACT MOBILE
Consider this your portable security system. Anytime you sense danger, just hit the SOS button and it will offer to connect you to 911. For extra surveillance, purchase the "follow me" feature (\$2 a month; in-app purchase). Turning it on allows a select group of friends and family to track your whereabouts via GPS. (itunes.com)

2 BEEMINDER
Having trouble sticking to your plan to lose weight, do more crunches, or drink more water? Let money be your motivator. After pledging at least \$5, you'll receive daily reminders to enter info that indicates you're staying on track. If you miss your goal more than two days in a row, your credit card gets charged. (itunes.com or play.google.com)

3 EPOCRATES RX
Use it to check for drug interactions, learn about correct dosing, and get info on side effects or safety during pregnancy. It also estimates how much a medication will cost if you plan to pay out of pocket. It's like having a personal pharmacist on call! (itunes.com or play.google.com)
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