

Unplug Your Child

A Pediatrician's Quick Guide to Reducing Unnecessary EMF Exposure

Children now grow up surrounded by Wi-Fi, phones, Bluetooth devices, wearables, wireless classrooms, and EV cars. The long-term pediatric safety evidence is incomplete. Lack of proven harm does not establish long-term safety. The goal is not to promote fear or abandoning technology. It is to reduce unnecessary exposure while prioritizing that which provides medical or practical benefits.

My Top Ten Tips to Reduce the EMF Load

1. Keep phones off the body

Use speakerphone or a wired headset when practical. Avoid carrying an phone against the chest, abdomen, or in a child's pocket for prolonged periods.



2. Make sleep a safety EMF-Free zone

Do not place the phone beside a child's head at night. Use airplane mode when you do not need connectivity, and keep routers and wireless devices away from sleeping spaces. Turn them off when not in use.



3. Rethink wearables

A smartwatch or fitness tracker can sit directly on your child's body for many hours. Is continuous connectivity necessary? Remove it for sleep and use offline or airplane modes whenever possible. My suggestion: **AVOID**.



4. Reduce/Remove Bluetooth near the head

Limit/eliminate prolonged use of wireless earbuds when a wired option or the phone's speaker will suffice. Increasing distance is a simple exposure-reduction strategy.



5. Create distance from routers

Do not place Wi-Fi routers next to beds, cribs, homework stations, or other places where children spend many hours. Hardwired Ethernet is a great option for stationary devices.



6. Keep tablets and laptops off the body

Avoid use directly on the lap or abdomen. A desk or table increases distance from the body.



7. Look at the whole environment

Baby monitors, smart speakers, gaming systems, tablets, phones, watches, routers, and other devices can operate simultaneously. Think about the child's cumulative exposure and not just one device.



8. Schools matter!

Ask how wireless technology is being used in classrooms. Encourage wired connections where feasible and turn off transmitters when they are not needed. Become part of your child's school community such as class parent, parent-child association (PTA) member, and/or coordinate your child's friends' groups.



9. Cars are part of the conversation

Electric and hybrid vehicles generate low-frequency magnetic fields from current flow and propulsion electronics. Measurements studied to date are generally below international limits, but long-term pediatric outcome data are limited.



10. Measure when concerned

A qualified building biologist or other experienced professional can assess radiofrequency and low-frequency magnetic-field sources in your home. Measurements can help families prioritize changes rather than guessing.



MEDICALLY NECESSARY WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY IS DIFFERENT

A child with type 1 diabetes may depend on a continuous glucose monitor (CGM) to detect low or high sugars and improve glucose management. Do not discontinue medically necessary monitoring because of EMF concerns. Preserve the medical benefit and reduce unnecessary wireless exposures elsewhere.

THE PEDIATRIC BOTTOM LINE

We do not need to prove that every wireless technology is dangerous before making sensible exposure reductions. At the same time, uncertainty should not be presented as proof of harm. Use technology deliberately: keep what is useful or medically necessary, reduce what is unnecessary, and create distance whenever practical.

Have a listen to episodes 44 and 45 of [The New MDS](#) for more information.

Selected references:

1. Lin J, Lu M, Wu T, Yang L, Wu T. Evaluating extremely low frequency magnetic fields in the rear seats of the electric vehicles. *Radiation Protection Dosimetry*. 2018;182(2):190–199. doi:10.1093/rpd/ncy048. PMID: 29584925.
2. Melnick, R.L., Moskowitz, J.M., Héroux, P. et al. The WHO-commissioned systematic reviews on health effects of radiofrequency radiation provide no assurance of safety. *Environ Health* 24, 70 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-025-01220-4>.

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