

EMF Exposure and Childhood Leukemia—No Link Found

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A team of researchers¹ has published the results of its study examining the link between residential exposure to magnetic fields and acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) in children. The study, published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, concludes that there was no increased risk of ALL for children living in homes that received a high “wire-code” rating. (The wire-code refers to a power line classification method used as an indicator of residential EMF exposure. It is a visual assessment of power lines near homes.) In addition, risk of ALL in children was not shown to be linked to the residential magnetic field levels measured for the study.

The study was designed to address limitations associated with earlier

epidemiological studies. The study (1) tried to reduce the lag time between ALL diagnosis and magnetic field measurements, (2) used a larger number of case studies, and (3) evaluated a larger number of potentially confusing variables. One limitation that remains is the lack of EMF measurements for residences before cancer was diagnosed.

The report concluded that, according to the study results, there is “little support for the hypothesis that living in homes with high time-weighted average magnetic-field levels or in homes close to electrical transmission or distribution lines is related to the risk of childhood ALL.”

¹From the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics, National Cancer Institute; the Children’s Cancer Group; the Division of Pediatric Epidemiology and Clinical Research, University of Minnesota School of Medicine, Minneapolis; EM Factors; Westat Inc.; and Information Management Services.

Source: Linet, Martha S.; Elizabeth E. Hatch; Ruth A. Kleinerman; et al. “Residential Exposure to Magnetic Fields and Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia in Children.” *The New England Journal of Medicine* 337, no.1 (July 3, 1997): 1–7.