

Five Ways Our Smartphones (And 5G) Influence Our Wellness



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Entrepreneurs

Using the soft skills for organizational success

Smartphones are ubiquitous! We're so dependent on our mobile devices, it's hard for some of us to imagine spending a day or even a few hours "unplugged." There's even a name for it: nomophobia— the fear of being without your phone.

As a giant advocate for the impact of health and wellness on executive effectiveness, I wonder is so much dependence on these devices a good thing or bad? Yes, and yes. As someone who relies on my own devices perhaps more than I'd like, I want to share some ways to keep our dependence in balance.



For input, I spoke with Gentry Jensen, CEO of [Penumbra Brands](#), a company with a portfolio of mobile device accessories for improving our lives by protecting the devices we carry.

1. **Freedom.** The phone allows you to work from anywhere that carries a signal. So we think about using fresh air and bare feet as options to let our bodies stay “grounded,” Some executives make it a practice to take brisk walks during conference calls. The aerobic activity serves another benefit as well – the blood and oxygen flowing to your brain will help you to think more clearly. I challenge you to give it a try. But Jensen suggests using ear buds (preferably the old-fashioned wired kind) to reduce the amount of time you spend with a transmitting device to your ear. If you can’t get outside, consider an ergonomic exercise ball for your seat or a standing desk.
2. **Wellness Apps.** As I’ve mentioned in previous columns, the wellness industry is approaching \$2 trillion worldwide – why not tap into this burgeoning market, both as a consumer and as an entrepreneur? As of March 2019, Google Play has 37,143 health and wellness apps. A survey last year found 42 percent of U.S. adults stated they used digital technology to measure their fitness or health goals. I know many executives who love having nutrition trackers, health monitoring programs and activity monitors to keep tabs on how we’re doing. Personally, the more data I can have, the better I do.

3. **Keeping Clean.** A scientific [study](#) found more than 17,000 bacterial germs on the cell phones of high school students. Another study found phones are more than ten times dirtier than toilet seats. A microbiologist suggests some simple tips for keeping your phone clean: keep your phone to yourself, keep it out of the bathroom and clean your phone often. Jensen suggests wiping your devices frequently with an eco-friendly cleaning solution such as the [one his company offers](#) or with a soft microfiber cloth and a mixture of 60% water and 40% rubbing alcohol.

4. **Reputation Protection.** Having a broken phone could be hazardous to your love life and even your business. An online dating service found that 92% of people judge others poorly for having a scratched or broken phone—and the unlucky phone owners are 56% less likely to get a date during the year. A [British study](#) found that 62% of people make judgments based on the condition of their phone by assuming they are careless, in debt or unreliable. In this regard, Gadget Guard offers cell phone cases, screen protectors and even cell phone insurance to help protect your phone and reputation. On the health side, Jensen suggests giving your eyes a break, especially from your phone screen's blue light emission, which can cause irritated eyes, sleep loss, blurred vision and premature eye aging. Here's a little known hack for reducing the blue light on your iPhone or iPad: Go to Settings > Display & Brightness, and at the Display & Brightness screen, tap the Night Shift setting. This feature alters the screen temperature of your device to a warmer color, which filters out the blue light.

5. **Finally, the 5G Phenomena.** The jury is still out on how much danger cell phone [radiation](#) poses. The Food and Drug Administration says available evidence does not support adverse health risks. However, several peer-reviewed scientific studies) shows varying levels of tissue damage to laboratory animals. Scientists agree 5G introduces new challenges because of the requirement for denser cell

tower networks which increases exposure and new frequencies with unknown biological consequences.

For this reason, Jensen notes that Gadget Guard phone cases will come equipped with alara technology for reducing mobile phone radiation exposure. In his opinion, evidence points to legitimate concern to protect yourself from radiation so close to your body. The company's research shows its patented technology is reducing the amount of energy being absorbed by the body by more than 50%.



In 2011 the World Health Organization (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified radiofrequency electromagnetic fields as possibly carcinogenic to humans. BRINKCASE.COM

In short, if we can't live without our devices, we need to adopt ways to live better with them. To that end, I hope these ideas are helpful. (And on that note...where did I leave my phone?)

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