

About Microwave Ovens

Microwave ovens heat food by bombarding it with electromagnetic radiation, causing the food molecules to vibrate and change polarity super rapidly: hundreds of billions of times per second. The friction between the vibrating molecules creates heat within the food (in contrast to a conventional oven, which heats from the outside in).

Research has suggested that this process can cause food molecules to rearrange into substances that are toxic to the human body. One study showed that microwaving milk changes the amino acid L-proline into a toxic substance. Although there are not many studies on the effect of eating microwaved food, one Swiss study found increased cholesterol levels and immune response in subjects after they ate microwaved vegetables.

Uneven heating of food is also a hazard of microwaves, which is the reason for the well-known warnings against heating infant milk in a microwave; even though the bottle may be cool on the outside, the liquid inside can be scalding hot. Anyone who has ever been burned by molten food inside a container that came out of a microwave feeling cool to the touch can testify to this risk.

Leakage of radiation from a microwave oven that is in use can also pose a health risk to those in the vicinity. Once thought to be safe, microwave radiation exposure is increasingly being linked to adverse health effects.

Microwave ovens may be convenient, but the cost to health of this convenience may be very high.

- Nan Wishner, C. Hom., 2009