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CAN HIGH TECH DEVICES RESULT IN LOW MALE FERTILITY?**RECENT STUDIES SUGGEST LAPTOP COMPUTERS MIGHT BE A REASON...**

(Reston, VA) For men who plan on being fathers someday, there is some key advice that they should heed. Previously, aspiring fathers were told to avoid tight pants, hot baths and even saunas to lessen the odds of being infertile. Now want-to-be fathers should rethink the frequency of their laptop usage. Recent studies show that the use of laptops can severely reduce sperm count and fertility. It has long been known that heat has a negative effect on sperm production. "Sperm production and development is greatly affected if the body does not maintain a certain testicular temperature," states **Dr. Fady Sharara, a board certified reproductive endocrinologist and Medical Director of the Virginia Center for Reproductive Medicine.** A new study conducted at The State University of New York, showed that the combination of the heat generated from the laptop with the position needed to rest the laptop on the lap caused a significant increase in scrotal temperature.

Laptop computers can reach an internal temperature of around 160 degrees Fahrenheit. In a recent study, published in the journal *Human Reproduction*, researchers asked 29 healthy male volunteers, between the ages of 21 and 35, to participate in an experiment. The researchers measured scrotal temperature changes caused by the laptops and seating positions. Sitting with the thighs together, the position needed to balance the laptop, alone caused scrotal temperatures to rise. As Dr. Sharara explains, "Positioning your computer on your lap requires you to keep your legs together, which traps the scrotum between the legs, therefore elevating scrotal temperatures. This in combination with the heat generated by the device produces a direct localized heat that, in the long term, can significantly reduce a male's fertility." The changes may be reversible, but repetitive heat exposure to the scrotum might cause permanent damage. It is possible that external protective devices could help, but until further research is done, Dr. Sharara advises teenage boys and young men to limit the amount of time that laptop computers rest on their laps.

In addition, men who work in high tech jobs, especially computer programmers, have lower sperm counts, motility (speed of movement) and morphology. The reason being the same, i.e the long hours spent sitting down. Dr Sharara recommends taking frequent breaks and taking multivitamins for their antioxidant properties.

Mobile phones are another device that researchers are linking to male infertility. Recent studies show that heavy mobile phone users had sperm counts that were up to 30 percent lower than non-cell phone users. Additionally, many of the remaining sperm showed signs of abnormality, further reducing fertility. The research indicates that radiation from cell phones harms sperm cells. But buyer beware! Not only does using a cell phone affect sperm count and motility, but simply having it in standby mode can do the same. Dr. Sharara warns, "Those who carry their cell phones near their groin area, in their hip pockets or on a belt holster, are at a higher risk of infertility than those men carrying their phones in briefcases." Spending less time on your cell phone and laptop at work could actually be beneficial to your reproductive health.

For more information, or to set-up an interview with Dr. Fady Sharara, please contact Marcela Bequillard at KMR Communications, Inc. via phone at 212-213-6444 or e-mail at marcela@kmrcommunications.com.