

Legislative Concerns: Iowa Dermatology Society

Smart Tan International and the International Tanning association claims that there is no credible scientific evidence or consensus that regular moderate non burning tanning causes skin cancer, that the health benefits (vitamin D) far outweigh any theoretic risks, that sunscreen causes skin cancer, that tanning is natural (“nature’s sunscreen”), that their machines are safe and controlled, just like those in doctor’s offices, and that sunscreens actually cause most of the skin cancer increase we see.

Our message is, in a nutshell: 1) Science tells us that tanning causes cancer. It is especially dangerous for young people. 2) The information consumers are given by the industry unfairly distorts that truth, and their machines are dangerously intense, variable, and unregulated. 3) Therefore – a large coalition of Iowans are joining the national movement to prevent skin cancer by restricting tanning for those under the age of 18.

If you want to read just one paper to become more familiar with the issue, the article by Henry Lim in JAAD (**Adverse effects of ultraviolet radiation from the use of indoor tanning equipment: Time to ban the tan** (JAAD 10.1016/j.jaad.2010.11.032.) summarizes the main points nicely.

Please check out the Iowa Dermatologic Society WEBSITE FOR MORE LINKS AND SUPPORT MATERIALS. <http://www.iowadermsociety.org/>

Skin Cancer Prevention

- **There is a broad coalition** of physicians (Iowa Dermatology Society, American Academy of Dermatology, American Academy of Pediatrics, and American Academy of Family Practice) and others supporting skin cancer prevention bill. The American Cancer Society and AIM at MELANOMA.
 - <http://www.aimatmelanoma.org/en/aim-for-action/getting-involved/get-active-in-public-policy.html>
 - <http://www.cancer.org/>
- **33 States now restrict** underage UV tanning, **13 have age restrictions between 14-18 years**. Nebraska joins a list of other states, including: **Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington**, considering legislation to ban minors from using tanning devices.

Cancer of the Skin caused by Ultraviolet Radiation

- Ultraviolet radiation and UV tanning devices are rated by the FDA as **carcinogenic to humans in the highest risk category** alongside **arsenic, tobacco, and asbestos**.
- **Tanning beds are far more intense** than natural sun exposure, averaging double the UVB and four times the UVA. High-intensity units can have 12-14 times the UVA. Human skin has never before been subjected to these concentrated levels of UVA – causing a dramatic rise in the incidence of malignant melanoma in young women.

- Both **burns** and **slow accumulation** of ultraviolet radiation damage in skin cells have been strongly linked to cancers of the skin. Of course, burns are the most concerning. **Nearly 60%** of users of tanning facilities **report having been burned**.
- Even minimal exposure to UV radiation from tanning beds before the age of 35 can increase the risk of developing melanoma by 87 percent (almost double). Melanoma is rising twice as fast among young women as young men, and **one American dies every hour** from this disease.
- In addition to these known risks new evidence demonstrates that ever-use of indoor tanning beds is associated with a **69%** increased risk of early-onset basal cell carcinoma (BCC), the most common form of skin cancer. Risk of developing BCC was higher in those who begin indoor tanning at earlier ages (less than 16 years old).
- **Distribution** of melanomas on young women has changed from predominantly legs to the **trunk**, including “double covered areas,” where they rarely showed up before, but which are exposed in tanning devices.
- Prohibiting the use of indoor tanning devices for all minors under the age of 18 is critical to preventing future skin cancers. Survey data indicate use of these devices increases with each year of adolescence. **Indoor tanning rates among 14-, 15-, 16-, and 17-year-old girls in the past year were 5%, 13.6%, 20.9%, and 26.8%, respectively.**

The Threat of Indoor Tanning Facilities

- **Four out of five** salons falsely **claimed that indoor tanning is beneficial to a young person’s health**, claiming that tanning would prevent cancer, treat depression and low self-esteem, prevent and treat arthritis, weight loss, osteoporosis, cellulite, lupus, and fibromyalgia, as well as boost the immune system.
- **Nearly all salons denied the known risks of indoor tanning.** They told undercover investigators that young people are not at risk for developing skin cancer, that rising rate of skin cancer are linked to sunscreen, and that government regulators had certified the safety of indoor tanning.

High Costs of Treating Cancer of the Skin

- Non-Melanoma skin cancer is the **fifth most expensive cancer to treat** in the Medicare population. Skin cancers place a financial burden on an already stretched health care system. And this public-health issue is just getting started.
- With the high levels of usage by young people, we will see even more unprecedented numbers of skin cancers in younger patients, and they will continue to develop more skin cancers throughout their lives.
- Melanoma cost an estimated \$2.36 billion to treat in 2010.