Indoor Tanning Fact Sheet

Who Tans Indoors?

- On an average day in the United States, more than 1 million people tan in tanning salons.¹
- Of the customers, 70 percent are Caucasian girls and women, aged 16 to 49 years.²
- Nearly 30 million people tan indoors in the United States annually. Of these, 2.3 million are teens.³
- The indoor tanning industry has an estimated revenue of $5 billion, a fivefold increase from 1992.⁴,⁵

Risks of Indoor Tanning

- The United States Department of Health & Human Services has declared ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and artificial sources, such as tanning beds and sun lamps, as a known carcinogen (cancer causing substance).⁶
- Indoor tanning lamps emit UVA and UVB radiation at levels that are far higher than the sun. New, high-pressure sunlamps emit doses that can be as much as 15 times that of the sun.⁷
- Exposure to UV light is a known risk factor for melanoma.⁸
- A Swedish study presents strong evidence that indoor tanning increases the risk of melanoma, especially when indoor tanning begins at an early age.⁹
- Medical research shows that exposure to UVA radiation is associated with an increased risk for squamous cell carcinoma and basal cell carcinoma, the two most common types of skin cancer.¹⁰
- A review of 7 studies found a statistically significant 75% increase in the risk of melanoma in those who had exposure to tanning beds before the age of 35.¹¹

Legislation

- The American Academy of Dermatology Association (AADA) opposes indoor tanning and supports a ban on the production and sale of indoor tanning equipment for non-medical purposes.
- Only half of the states regulate indoor tanning use by teens, despite the call from the World Health Organization (WHO) to prohibit teens from indoor tanning because of the dangers.¹²,¹³

(Last updated 2007)


