

# Melanoma / Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DERMATOLOGY “RAYS: YOUR GRADE” SURVEY FACT SHEET

The “RAYS: Your Grade” survey polled adults in 32 U.S. metropolitan regions spanning 29 states and assigned rankings to cities based on residents’ answers to a range of questions testing their knowledge, attitudes and behaviors toward tanning and sun protection. Cities were then ranked based on the percentage of people who scored A’s and B’s.

#### **Attitudes**

- Nearly three-quarters (73%) of adults feel that people look more attractive with a tan.
  - Eight out of 10 (83%) Tampa residents agree that people look more attractive with a tan.
  - 39% of Salt Lake City residents believe that people do not look more attractive with a tan.
- More than two-thirds (68%) of adults feel that having a tan makes people look healthier.
  - Nearly half (45%) of Washington, DC, respondents disagree that people look healthier with a tan, followed closely by Salt Lake City residents (44%).
  - Nearly eight out of 10 (79%) Tampa residents agree that people look healthier with a tan, followed closely by Cleveland residents (76%) and Cincinnati residents (76%).
- Nearly half (47%) of adults incorrectly believe that sun exposure is healthy.
  - 60% of Dallas residents incorrectly believe that sun exposure is healthy.
  - 65% of Philadelphia residents know that sun exposure is not healthy, followed closely by Baltimore residents (63%).

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- More than one-third (37%) of adults incorrectly believe their skin type means they don't have to worry about sun exposure.
  - Almost half (49%) of Chicago residents incorrectly believe that given their skin type, they don't have to worry too much about sun exposure.
- Four out of five (80%) adults are concerned about skin cancer and feel it is important to protect themselves.
  - Nine out of 10 (89%) Houston residents are concerned about skin cancer and feel it is important to protect themselves.
  - About one-quarter (26%) of Maine residents are not concerned about skin cancer and do not feel it is important to protect themselves.
- Almost one in four adults (24%) incorrectly believe that given the climate in which they live, they don't have to worry about skin cancer.
  - Nearly half (44%) of Seattle residents and one-third (35%) of Detroit residents incorrectly believe that the climate they live in means they don't have to worry about skin cancer.
  - 86% of Tampa resident understand that the climate they live in means they need to worry about skin cancer.

**Behaviors**

- Four in 10 (42%) adults report having sunbathed in the past year.
  - 11% of Tampa residents report sunbathing more than 50 days in the past year vs. an average of 3% of adults across all cities polled.
- Nearly one in 10 (9%) adults have used sun lamps or tanning beds in the past year.
  - 95% of Phoenix residents report never having used sun lamps or tanning beds in the past year.
- One in three adults report at least one sunburn that resulted in peeled skin (30%) and 5% report at least one burn that resulted in blistering in the past year.
  - Fewer than one in five (18%) of Baltimore residents experienced peeling and blistering (1%) from sun exposure.
  - More than 2 out of 5 (42%) Cincinnati residents reported at least one sunburn that resulted in peeling and 13% report at least one burn that resulted in blistering.
- Nearly two-thirds (65%) of adults got a tan last year.
  - Despite the sunny, warm climate year-round, nearly half of Miami residents (45%) did not get a tan last year, helping it rank as the No. 3 sun-smart city.
- Half (50%) of adults have been sunburned at least once in the past year.
  - Two-thirds (66%) of Cincinnati residents have been sunburned at least once in the past year, contributing to Cincinnati's No. 24 ranking.

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- A large majority (71%) of adults do not apply sunscreen on an average day.
  - 78% of Portland residents do not apply sunscreen on an average day.
- About one-quarter (23%) of adults never examine their own skin for changes to moles and other skin blemishes.
  - Despite their No. 5 ranking, one-third (34%) of Los Angeles residents never examine their own skin for changes to moles and other skin blemishes.
- More than half (54%) of adults have never been screened for skin cancer by a health care provider.
  - 66% of Chicago residents and 64% of St. Louis residents have never been screened for skin cancer by a health care provider, which contributed to low rankings for Chicago and St. Louis.

**Knowledge**

- Almost two-thirds (65%) of adults know that sun exposure during childhood is related to skin cancer in adulthood.
  - Nearly three-fourths (74%) of Portland residents know that sun exposure during childhood is related to skin cancer in adulthood.
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of adults know that you can get skin cancer on parts of your skin that are never exposed to the sun.
  - Nearly three-fourths of Los Angeles residents (75%) and Seattle residents (73%) know that you can get skin cancer on parts of your skin that are never exposed to the sun.
- More than half (52%) of adults know that getting a base tan is not a healthy way to protect skin from sun damage.
  - 66% of Washington, D.C., residents know that getting a base tan is not a healthy way to protect skin from sun damage.
  - 59% of Chicago residents incorrectly thought that getting a base tan is a healthy way to protect skin from sun damage.
- More than half (58%) of adults know that it is not smarter to tan indoors using a tanning bed.
  - 68% of District of Columbia residents know that it is not smarter to tan indoors using a tanning bed.
  - Only 52% of Chicago residents know that it is not smarter to tan indoors using a tanning bed.

The rankings of the 32 metropolitan areas are as follows:

- No. 1 – **Washington, DC**
- No. 2 – **New York City**
- No. 3 – **Miami**
- No. 4 – **Tampa**
- No. 5 – **Los Angeles**
- No. 6 – **Dallas**
- No. 7 – **Salt Lake City**
- No. 8 – **San Francisco**
- No. 9 (3-way tie) – **Idaho, Atlanta and Philadelphia**
- No. 12 – **Phoenix**
- No. 13 – **Portland**
- No. 14 – **Vermont**
- No. 15 (3-way tie) – **Providence, Baltimore and Boston**
- No. 18 (2-way tie) – **Hartford and Riverside, Calif.**
- No. 20 – **Houston**
- No. 21 (3-way tie) – **New Hampshire, Denver and St. Louis**
- No. 24 (2-way tie) – **Cincinnati and San Diego**
- No. 26 – **Detroit**
- No. 27 (2-way tie) – **Cleveland and Minneapolis**
- No. 29 – **Seattle**
- No. 30 – **Pittsburgh**
- No. 31 – **Maine**
- No. 32 – **Chicago**

For additional information on these rankings, visit the Academy Web site at [www.aad.org](http://www.aad.org). The public also can take a sun-smart quiz on the Academy’s Web site to test their UV knowledge, attitudes and behaviors and see how they compare to the national results. Those who complete the online quiz will receive their own personalized sun-smart profile with lifestyle tips.

#### **About the “RAYS: Your Grade” Survey**

The results of this study are based on an online national survey of 3,342 respondents (50 percent men and 50 percent women) in 32 U.S. metropolitan regions covering 29 states. The survey was conducted February 5 - 13, 2007, by Richard Day Research of Evanston, Ill. Respondents in each area were recruited randomly from a national online panel that closely reflects the U.S. population.

The American Academy of Dermatology (Academy), founded in 1938, is the largest, most influential, and most representative of all dermatologic associations. With a membership of more than 15,000 physicians worldwide, the Academy is committed to: advancing the diagnosis and medical, surgical and cosmetic treatment of the skin, hair and nails; advocating high standards in clinical practice, education, and research in dermatology; and supporting and enhancing patient care for a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. For more information, contact the Academy at 1-888-462-DERM (3376) or [www.aad.org](http://www.aad.org).