

We are not a fan of the tan

By ACSH Staff — October 27, 2011

If there is anyone who still isn't convinced that tanning beds significantly increase a person's risk of skin cancer, a recent study provides even more conclusive [evidence](#) [1]. Conducted by researchers from Harvard University and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, the study followed over 70,000 nurses from 1989 to 2009 and tracked their tanning bed habits during high school, college, and between the ages of 25 and 35.

The researchers found that the risk for developing basal and squamous cell carcinoma rose by 15 percent for every four visits to a tanning booth per year. The risk of developing melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer, rose 11 percent. And those who used tanning booths while they were younger experienced an even greater risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

The American Academy of Pediatrics already recommends banning the use of tanning beds for children under 18, and use by minors is already outlawed in California. But despite such clear evidence of the increased risk of skin cancer from tanning beds, surveys show that many teenage girls and young women continue to use them, despite knowing about these risks.

Some tanning salons advertise that they provide a safe tan, notes ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava. But these data should convince consumers that there is no such thing.

Those who desire a tan, instead of using a tanning booth, should consider trying a spray tan, which doesn't expose the user to any harmful rays, says ACSH staffer Jody Manley. I'm sure some alarmist group will warn people about the dangers of chemicals in spray-on tans. But that's nonsense; these products are clearly much safer than too much exposure to UV radiation.

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[1] <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/25/news/la-heb-tanning-booth-skin-cancer-melanoma-basal-squamous-cell-20111025>