

# Bronzing comes at a cost

By ACSH Staff — April 3, 2012

A new study published in *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* has found an unexpectedly dramatic [increase](#) [1] in skin cancer among younger adults, and the researchers believe it may be linked to the popularity of indoor tanning.

The study reviewed data from decades of patient records from the Rochester Epidemiology Project in Minnesota. By looking at first-time melanoma diagnoses, the researchers observed that, as compared to the data from 1970, in 2009 the incidence of melanoma had increased eight-fold among women and four-fold among men ages 18 to 39. Previous studies on tanning behavior suggest that the increasing use of these devices may in part explain the increase in skin cancer rates among young women. As Mayo Clinic dermatologist Dr. Jerry Brewer points out, Tanning beds can give you seven times the dose of UV radiation as the sun, but young adults are still going.

As we [reported](#) [2] earlier this year, younger adolescents often become especially concerned with having a tan. Yet researchers have noted that a consistent habit of tanning at that age significantly increases the risk of skin cancer in adulthood. And while efforts are increasing to prevent teenagers from using tanning salons, many kids still find ways around the age restrictions. Which is why ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross says, We need to do a much better job of getting the word out that this is an activity with serious repercussions for one's health.

Perhaps it might help younger people resist the allure of the tanning bed if they are informed that UV light is a known carcinogen, suggests ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava, and that using sunscreen can play an important role in preventing skin cancer.

Dr. Ross adds, It's a shame that some alarmist groups posing as health advocates warn teens about the phony risks of sunscreens, encouraging them to avoid using those products and endangering their health.

---

COPYRIGHT © 1978-2016 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.acsh.org/news/2012/04/03/bronzing-comes-cost>

## Links

[1] [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_123621.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_123621.html)

[2] [http://www.acsh.org/factsfears/newsid.3343/news\\_detail.asp](http://www.acsh.org/factsfears/newsid.3343/news_detail.asp)