

## Indoor Tanning No Safe Amount

**Indoor tanning salons are present across the country. These businesses may provide indoor tanning through tanning beds or tanning booths. Tanning beds and tanning booths use UV light in high intensity for short periods to make the skin tan.**

The intensity of the UV radiation produced by indoor tanning devices may be 10 to 15 times higher than the midday sun. Nearly 28 million people tan indoors in the United States each year, and 2.3 million are teens. In 2013, about 30% of non-Hispanic white females reported going to an indoor tanning salon.

There are several myths about indoor tanning; a common myth is that it is a helpful thing to do before a beach vacation or spring break to get a "base tan." The myth suggests that if you are a little bit tan when you get to the beach, you are less likely to get a sunburn. Unfortunately, this is just a myth: tanning before going to the beach does not protect against sunburn. Another myth is that indoor tanning is a healthy way to get vitamin D. This is also a myth; indoor tanning is not a healthy or effective way to get vitamin D.

In 2009, the World Health Organization classified UV radiation-emitting tanning devices such as tanning beds and tanning booths as Class I carcinogens—substances and behaviors that are most concerning for developing cancer. Indoor tanning has been shown to increase the risk of developing 3 kinds of skin cancer: squamous cell cancer, basal cell cancer, and melanoma. These risks are greater if a person starts tanning earlier or tans often. Melanoma is one of the most common causes of cancer among adolescents and causes more deaths than any other skin cancer. Other risks of indoor tanning include aging of the skin, with loss of skin smoothness, uniform color, and elasticity.

There are several factors that increase the likelihood of adolescents using indoor tanning salons. These risks include believing that being tan helps you be beautiful, having lots of friends who go tanning, and having parents who allow tanning. Being exposed to tan models in magazines or tan actors on television or movies also increases the likelihood of teens using tanning salons.

Parents can play a strong role in helping prevent their children from indoor tanning by talking with their children about the dangers of indoor tanning. Parents can let them know that no amount of indoor tanning is safe. Parents can talk with their children openly about their ideas about beauty and send a clear message that being beautiful does not equal being tan. Parents should not sign permission slips from indoor tanning salons allowing their children to go tanning.

**Author:** Megan A. Moreno, MD, MEd, MPH



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention  
<http://www.truthaboutindoortanning.org/action/everyone/national-cancer-institute-nci-health-information-tip-sheet-writers-artificial-tannin>

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### What Is Being Done to Stop Children and Adolescents From Using Indoor Tanning Devices?

Many organizations, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Dermatology, and World Health Organization, recommend that children and adolescents younger than 18 years should never be allowed to use indoor tanning devices. As of 2015, 11 US states have laws that ban indoor tanning bed use by children younger than 18 years. Nineteen states have laws that require children to be at least 14 years old to use indoor tanning devices.

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