TEENS, TANNING & MELANOMA RISK

Melanoma is one of the most rapidly increasing cancers among Minnesota residents. Melanoma is the least common but the most deadly skin cancer, accounting for about 4% of all cases but 79% of skin cancer deaths.

MORE YOUNG ADULTS DIAGNOSED WITH MELANOMA

Melanoma is not just a concern for older adults. The risk of being diagnosed with melanoma is increasing for all age groups, including young adults:

- Melanoma is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer among adolescents and young adults (ages 15-39) in the U.S.
- Since 1995 the number of white women ages 20-49 years old diagnosed with melanoma has increased 5% each year.
- Females in this age group are twice as likely to have melanoma as males.

![Melanoma Incidence by Sex, Ages 20-49*](https://apps.health.state.mn.us/mndata/cancer_melanoma)

**WHY ARE MELANOMA RATES INCREASING?**

A large share of melanomas (65-90%) are attributable to exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light, either from the sun or from artificial sources such as tanning beds. Other risk factors for melanoma include family history of skin cancer, fair skin, light colored eyes, blond or red hair, and presence of moles or freckles.

The World Health Organization has classified tanning beds as causing cancer in humans. Indoor tanning is potentially more harmful than excessive sun exposure because of the greater intensity of the UV radiation emitted, the greater amount of exposed skin, and the UV exposure to portions of the body not generally exposed to solar UV. Tanning beds are particularly dangerous for younger users. Use of a tanning bed before age 35 increases the risk of melanoma by 59% and an extra 2% with each indoor tanning session. Despite these risks, indoor tanning is popular - 34% of 11th grade white females in Minnesota have tanned indoors in the past year, and more than half tanned indoors 10 or more times.
WHAT ARE STATES DOING TO PROTECT TEENS?

In the last two years, six states have enacted laws to prohibit minors under 18 years of age from using tanning beds: California, Vermont, Nevada, Texas, Oregon, and Illinois. In 2013 a total of 22 state legislatures, including Minnesota, considered similar bills to ban minors’ use of tanning beds.

Under current Minnesota law, there are no restrictions on indoor tanning for minors 16 and 17 years old. Minors under 16 years of age can tan if their parents appear in person prior to the first tanning session and sign a statement.

HOW CAN WE DECREASE THE RISK OF MELANOMA AND OTHER SKIN CANCERS?

INDOOR TANNING

• Do not tan indoors.

OUTDOORS

• Seek shade, especially during midday hours.
• If you are in the sun, take four steps to be safe:
  1. Wear clothing to protect exposed skin.
  2. Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears, and neck.
  3. Wear sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100% of UVA and UVB rays as possible.
  4. Use sunscreen with a sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher that has both UVA and UVB broad spectrum protection.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION

MELANOMA


INDOOR TANNING