

# Teens, indoor tanning and melanoma

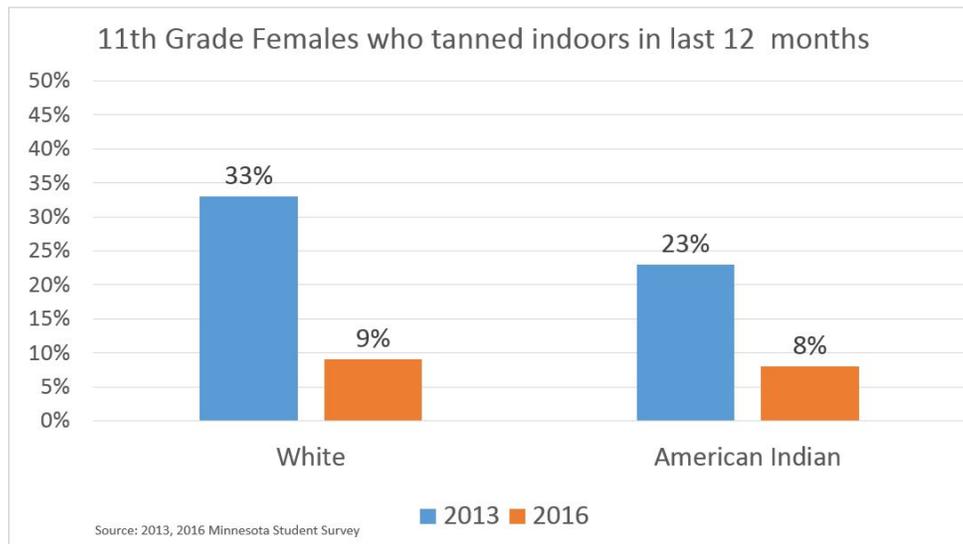
## Fewer teens tan indoors thanks to 2014 state law

In 2014 the Minnesota legislature took a big step to protect youth by passing a law that prohibits minors from tanning at indoor tanning facilities. The legislature took this step after growing evidence that indoor tanning is linked to melanoma, a deadly form of skin cancer. The law has had a big impact. Based on Minnesota Student Survey data, the number of White teens that tanned indoors decreased 73% from 2013 to 2016.

*The younger a woman is when she starts tanning indoors, the greater her risk of skin cancer.*

- The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Skin Cancer (2014)

Yet some White and American Indian teens continue to tan indoors. The Minnesota Department of Health estimates that over 2,000 11<sup>th</sup> grade White females will tan indoors in 2016. Additional work is needed to protect teens from the health risks of indoor tanning.



*The number of teens who tan indoors has decreased since 2013. White and American Indian 11<sup>th</sup> grade females have the highest rate of indoor tanning among high school students.*

## Indoor tanning linked to increase melanoma risk

Melanoma is increasing in all age groups. It is the second most common cancer among young adults ages 20-49 years old.<sup>1</sup> The increasing rates of melanoma led the U. S. Surgeon General to issue a Call to Action to Prevent Skin Cancer in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

The vast majority of skin cancers are caused by exposure to ultraviolet light, either from the sun or from tanning indoors. The risk of skin cancer from indoor tanning increases with each tanning session and is highest among those who start tanning at a younger age.<sup>3,4</sup>

Tanning beds expose users to large levels of ultraviolet light, as much as 13 times the ultraviolet light from summer noontime sun in the U.S.<sup>5</sup> In addition to skin cancer, tanning bed users can experience burns, skin infections, injury to the eyes, and wrinkles.

Minnesota is one of 14 states that bans people under 18 years of age from indoor tanning.<sup>6</sup> In 2015, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) published proposed rules to protect youth nationwide as well as adults. If adopted, the FDA rules will restrict tanning bed use to adults 18 years and older. The rules will also require adults sign a consent form.<sup>7</sup>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that a nationwide policy to prohibit minors from tanning indoors could save \$877 million in treatment costs over the lifetime of youth age 14 years or younger in the U.S. (based on an 80% reduction in tanning bed use).<sup>8</sup>

The best protection against skin cancer is reduced exposure to ultraviolet light, both from the sun and from tanning beds.

### REFERENCES

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