Reasons to Give Up Tanning?

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified tanning beds and other sources of ultraviolet radiation as definite causes of cancer, stating that tanning beds are carcinogenic to humans.
- The U.S. Congress approval of a 10 percent excise tax on the use of indoor tanning beds went into effect on July 1, 2010. This tax is similar to the “sin tax” on cigarettes.
- The International Agency for Research on Cancer states that people younger than 30 who use tanning machines increase their risk of skin cancer by 75 percent.
- As of April 8, 2011, children under 18 years of age are now banned from using ultraviolet devices in Great Britain.
- As of November 2009, the Brazilian National Health Surveillance Agency banned ultraviolet tanning nationwide.

No Tan is a Safe Tan!

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*Some content in this brochure is obtained from the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center and the Skin Cancer Foundation.

A Tan To Die For

The Dangers of Indoor Tanning

Indoor tanning is now considered among the most dangerous of cancer-causing agents.

North Dakota Cancer Coalition

Planning for a cancer-free future.

What Is Tanning?

Tanning is the skin's reaction to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. When skin is exposed to UV rays, cells called melanocytes produce the brown pigment melanin, which darkens the skin. This darkening of the skin cells is the skin's **defense** against further damage from UV radiation.

Are Tanning Booths Safer Than the Sun?

NO. Most tanning beds emit mainly UVA radiation. These so-called "tanning rays" are less likely to cause sunburn than UVB radiation from sunlight; however, contrary to the claims of some tanning parlors, that does not make them safe. In fact, they cause deeper skin damage. UVA rays have a suspected link to melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer.

What About a Base Tan?

Darker skin does offer greater protection than light skin against sunburn and skin cancer. However, that applies to people with *naturally* darker skin. Tanning, like sunburns, attacks the skin's DNA, producing genetic defects that may cause skin cancer.

Is Tanning Bad For You?

The sun's UV rays damage the DNA of the skin's epidermal cells, triggering enzymes that race to repair the damage. However, these enzymes do not always repair the DNA successfully, and all this unrepaired damage can lead to mutations that increase the risk of skin cancer. Also, repeated unprotected sun exposure can cause photoaging — wrinkles, sagging skin and spots associated with sun damage.

UV or Vitamin D?

Some people think that using sun protective measures can lead to vitamin D deficiency. Here are some truths about UV and vitamin D:

1. Your skin needs only minimal UVB exposure to reach the recommended levels of vitamin D.

2. Your skin can produce only a limited amount of vitamin D from UVB.

3. After reaching the production limit, further exposure actually destroys the vitamin, decreasing vitamin D levels.

4. Therefore, the Skin Cancer Foundation recommends obtaining vitamin D largely from food or supplements.

5. Examples of food with high vitamin D includes: fish, vitamin D fortified milk and yogurt, eggs.