



## Issue:

# Prohibiting Minors from Using Artificial Tanning Facilities

### ● MMA Position

With rates of skin cancer growing and evidence of the link to artificial UV exposure clear, Minnesota should treat this dangerous carcinogen just as we do tobacco and prohibit minors from using artificial tanning facilities.

### ● Background

Each year, approximately 120 Minnesotans die from melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer<sup>1</sup>. According to the American Cancer Society, the incidence of melanoma in Minnesota has doubled since 1988<sup>2</sup>. The World Health Organization (WHO) considers tanning beds carcinogenic<sup>3</sup>.

Nearly 25 percent of tanning bed users are between the ages of 13 to 19—an estimated 2.3 million teens in the United States<sup>4,5</sup>. Studies have found a 75 percent increase in the risk of melanoma in those who have been exposed to UV radiation from indoor tanning<sup>6</sup>. The direct cost of skin cancer in the United States was estimated to be \$1.5 billion in 2004. Melanoma alone costs nearly \$300 million<sup>7</sup>.

There is no “safe” tan. Tanning devices have UV radiation levels that far exceed what is found in natural sunlight<sup>8</sup>. Nor is artificial tanning a good source for

vitamin D. Vitamin D is produced in the body through exposure to UVB rays. To minimize burning, modern indoor tanning devices emit predominantly UVA rays, which do not produce vitamin D<sup>9</sup>.

Current Minnesota law allows children under the age of 16 to use tanning facilities with parental consent, and there are no restrictions on those 16 and older. Eleven states already have banned tanning beds for children, ranging from age 13 to 18.

### ● Talking Points

- Just like policymakers have protected youth from the dangers of tobacco by preventing minors from purchasing tobacco products, Minnesota should prohibit children from using another cancer-producing activity – artificial tanning.
- The research is clear that early and repeated exposure to artificial tanning sources increases the chances of developing melanoma later in life. We owe it to our children to reduce their odds of battling this deadly cancer.
- To reduce overall costs in our health care system, we must take steps to fix “the easy things.” Prohibiting minor access to an unnecessary cancer risk is such a step.

1. American Cancer Society, Minnesota Cancer Facts and Figures 2011; <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/mcss/documents/mncancerfactsfigures2011033011.pdf>
2. American Cancer Society, Minnesota Cancer Facts and Figures 2011; <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/mcss/documents/mncancerfactsfigures2011033011.pdf>
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Toxicology Program. Report on carcinogens, 11th ed: Exposure to sunlamps or sunbeds.
4. Zeller S, Lazovich D, Forster J, Widome R. Do adolescent indoor tanners exhibit dependency? *J Am Acad Dermatol* 2006;54:589-96.
5. Dellavalle RP, Parker ER, Ceronky N, Hester EJ, Hemme B, Burkhardt DL, et al. Youth access laws: in the dark at the tanning parlor? *Arch Dermatol* 2003;139:443-8.
6. Lazovich, D, et al. “Indoor Tanning and Risk of Melanoma: A Case-Control Study in a Highly Exposed Population.” *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev.* 2010 June;19(6):1557-1568.
7. Lim HW, James WD, Rigel DS, Maloney ME, Spencer JM, Bhushan R. Adverse effects of ultraviolet radiation from the use of indoor tanning equipment: Time to ban the tan. *J Am Acad Dermatol.* 4 February 2011 (Article in Press DOI: 10.1016/j.jaad.2010.11.032).
8. Gilchrest BA. Sun exposure and vitamin D sufficiency. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2008;88:570-75..
9. Lim HW, James WD, Rigel DS, Maloney ME, Spencer JM, Bhushan R. Adverse effects of ultraviolet radiation from the use of indoor tanning equipment: Time to ban the tan. *J Am Acad Dermatol.* 4 February 2011 (Article in Press DOI: 10.1016/j.jaad.2010.11.032).