

healthy valley[®] MIAMI

ISSUE 9 November 2013

TEACHING A
**LIFE
LESSON**

UNDERSTANDING
**BACK
PAIN**

ENJOY THEM
WHILE YOU CAN

THE LINK BETWEEN
**TANNING BEDS
AND SKIN CANCER**
DR. ALYSA HERMAN

DOES
CROSSFIT
MAKE US
FASTER
RUNNERS?

STEM CELLS rebuild

**BARRY
BROWN'S
HEART**



SCAN THIS QR CODE TO VIEW
ONLINE MAGAZINE



IS IT POSSIBLE FOR **ADHD** KIDS TO SIT DOWN AND LISTEN?



Approximately 80% of melanomas are due to UV radiation.

THE LINK BETWEEN TANNING BEDS AND SKIN CANCER

By Alysa Herman, MD

People who use tanning beds are 2.5 times more likely to develop squamous cell carcinoma and 1.5 times more likely to develop basal cell carcinoma

Imagine if there were a button that you could push and in just a few minutes your whole body could develop an even, golden-brown tan. For those of you reading this who are fair-skinned, I know what you're thinking: if only Apple had an app for that! Well, the good news is that this technology does exist and has been available in the US since 1979. It's called a tanning bed. The bad news is that research continues to prove that tanning beds are not a safe alternative to sunbathing and have many undesirable side effects including, the most important side effect, skin cancer.

Have you ever heard any of the following so-called "truths"?

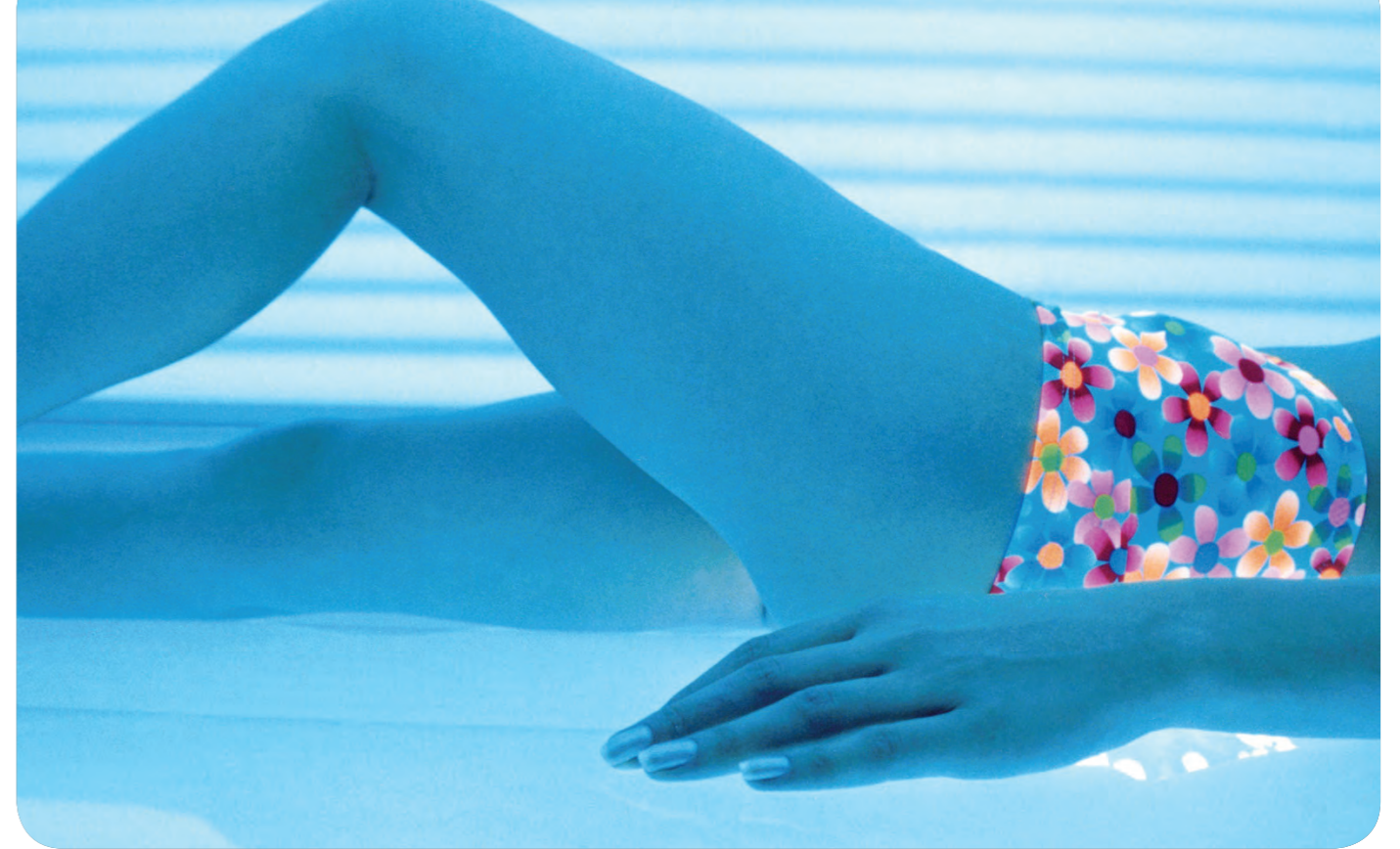
1. Indoor tanning is safer than tanning in the sun.
2. Indoor tanning creates a base tan that will protect against getting a sunburn.
3. Indoor tanning is a great way to get Vitamin D.

The truth is, despite what commercials and other forms of advertising lead you to believe, indoor tanning is not safe. There is no form of a safe tan, whether it is obtained at the beach from the sun or produced artificially from an indoor tanning bed. It is a well-established fact that ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun causes skin cancer. Because the lamps that are used in tanning beds also emit ultraviolet radiation, indoor tanning machines also increase your risk of skin cancer.

So let's debunk some myths for those of you who say, "I'm brown, not red" or "I don't burn. I tan." Whether your skin turns red signaling a sunburn, or turns brown demonstrating a suntan, both colors are evidence that damage is occurring. These changes in color are the skin's way of trying to protect itself. For those of you who have read the latest health and nutrition information and are concerned about obtaining adequate Vitamin D, there are dietary sources as well as quality over-the-counter supplements that will allow you to do so without the risks of sun exposure.

The desire to look tanned is so popular that the International Tanning Association estimates that it has approximately 30 million customers in the US, which is about 10% of the US population. More alarming is that 2.3 million of these indoor tanners are teenagers. So, why the concern? And why, in May of 2013, did the FDA propose new legislation to regulate these devices?

The following skin cancer statistics help us understand the cause for concern:



- Indoor tanning increases your risk of developing all types of skin cancer.
- Skin cancer is an epidemic in the US. In 2013, there will be more than 3.5 million new cases of basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma and more than 77,000 new cases of melanoma reported.
- Melanoma is the most deadly form of skin cancer.
- 1 in 50 Americans has a lifetime risk of developing melanoma.
- Melanoma is the most common cancer in adults 25-29 years old and the 2nd most common cancer in people 15-29 years old (frequent users of tanning beds).
- Approximately 80% of melanomas are due to UV radiation (Remember, tanning beds emit UV radiation.)

And the following data are specific to the health risks of indoor tanning:

- Indoor tanning increases your risk of developing all types of skin cancer. (It's

- so important that I had to say it again.)
- People who use tanning beds are 2.5 times more likely to develop squamous cell carcinoma and 1.5 times more likely to develop basal cell carcinoma.
- Just one visit to a tanning bed increases your risk of melanoma by 20%.
- People who use tanning beds for the first time before the age of 35 increase their risk of melanoma by 75%.

The health risks of tanning-bed use have become so apparent that, in May of this year, the FDA proposed new regulations that would require warnings to be displayed on tanning beds to inform consumers that 1) they increase the risk of skin cancer and 2) people under the age of 18 should not use them. In addition, this new proposal advocates changing the current classification from a Class 1 medical device (the same category as tongue depressors and Band-Aids) to a Class 2 medical device (the same category as CT scanners, which also expose people to radiation). Further, across the country, many individual states have enacted

legislation to either prohibit minors from using tanning beds or require parental permission and consent to use them.

In summary, there is no safe tan. Despite alluring advertising, indoor tanning beds do not provide a healthier alternative to sun tanning. A safe tan is like a healthy cigarette, a dangerous fantasy. Keep your skin healthy by avoiding tanning beds, protect your skin with daily sunscreen and protective clothing, and use self-tanners and bronzers to safely achieve the look of a tan.



➤ Dr. Alysa Herman is a Skin Cancer Specialist.

To know more or request a consultation, call (305) 444-4979 or visit www.dralsaherman.com