

# Motion Tanning beds

Motion: Tanning beds

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT Doctors Nova Scotia will advocate to governments at all levels to pass legislation regulating the artificial tanning industry, with a focus on banning access to children and youth under 18 years of age.**

## Global situation:

The incidence of melanoma varies by different regions of the world. One in three cancers worldwide is skin-related. The highest rates are found in countries with fair-skinned populations with strong tanning cultures. Canada falls into this category.<sup>1</sup>

The known consequences of excessive UV exposure include:

- skin cancers;
- eye damage;
- premature skin ageing; and,
- reduced effectiveness of the immune system, possibly leading to a greater risk of infectious diseases.<sup>2</sup>

While overexposure to solar ultraviolet radiation has long been known to increase the risk of skin cancer, until recently, use of artificial tanning equipment was ranked only as a probable cause of skin cancer. In 2009 the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) reclassified artificial UV radiation (tanning beds) to a Group 1 category (carcinogenic to humans).<sup>3</sup> The report noted widespread use of UV-emitting tanning devices in many developed countries, especially among young women. Additionally, the report noted consistent evidence of a positive association between the use of UV-emitting tanning devices and ocular

melanoma.<sup>4</sup> An article published in the Lancet Oncology journal in June 2009, *A review of human carcinogens - Part D: radiation*, concluded that the use of UV-emitting tanning devices that starts before age 35 increases the risk of cutaneous melanoma by 75 percent. A recent study in *Cancer, Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention* clearly demonstrated an increased melanoma risk in indoor tanners and even more alarming, an *escalating* risk with total hours, sessions or years of tanning bed use.

Following this reclassification, a number of health-related organizations established position statements discouraging the use of artificial UV tanning equipment by everyone, particular youth. These organizations include the World Health Organization, Canadian Cancer Society and Canadian Dermatology Association. While exposure to artificial UV radiation from tanning equipment is not recommended for anyone, use by youth is of particular concern. Health Canada's position is as follows: "Federal Provincial Territorial Radiation Protection Committee (FPTRPC) recommends that tanning and the use of tanning equipment, particularly by minors, be discouraged."

Around the world, some jurisdictions have already taken the necessary steps to restrict access to artificial UV tanning

equipment (tanning beds) to minors. This includes but is not limited to:

- United States: California, Texas and at least 29 other states have passed their own legislation governing the use of tanning facilities by minors.<sup>5</sup> California led the way in 2004, banning sunbed use for teens under age 14.<sup>6</sup> Texas recently passed the most restrictive law in the country, prohibiting use for all children and adolescents under age 16.<sup>7,8,9</sup>

- In 2007, the European Commission of Health and Consumer Services ruled that all new tanning machines brought into the European Union must reduce UVB to 1.5 percent of their UV emissions, not exceeding an "erythemal-weighted irradiance" of 0.3 W/m<sup>2</sup>, about 12 on the ultraviolet index scale. This lower UVB intensity should reduce the risk of sunburn, allowing slightly greater margin for error in determining exposure times.

- Europe: France, Belgium, Germany, Scotland, Spain and Portugal all now restrict sunbed use for persons under age 18. In France, the regulations also require all UV radiation-emitting appliances to be declared to the health authority. Trained personnel must supervise all commercial establishments, and any

claim that they provide health benefits is forbidden.<sup>10,11</sup>

· In addition to its recently passed legislation banning under-18s from using sunbeds, Scotland has mandated that all sunbed salons be supervised, with proper information provided to customers.<sup>12</sup>

· Australia has taken a leadership role in restricting access to tanning equipment; all five states in Australia have banned sunbed use for teens.<sup>13</sup>

· November 9, 2009, the Brazilian National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) banned UV cosmetic tanning altogether throughout the country.<sup>14</sup>

### **Canada's situation:**

There are approximately 5,000 cases of melanoma and 75,100 cases of non-melanoma skin cancers in Canada as of 2009 (Canadian Dermatology Association, 2009).

Government legislation regarding the tanning industry include Health Canada published guidelines for tanning salon owners, operators and users. One of the guidelines recommends that no one under the age of 16 use a tanning bed (Health Canada 2005). Compliance with this guideline is voluntary and there is no legislation enabling enforcement. The Radiation Emitting Devices (RED) Act (Health Canada 2004) provides some controls on the radiation emissions of the tanning device when the device is manufactured or imported.

Finally, the Competition Act states that businesses are prohibited against making a representation to the public, for the purpose of promoting the sale or supply of a product or any business interest, that is false or misleading. The Competition Act is enforced by the Competition Bureau of Canada, an independent law enforcement agency within Industry Canada's portfolio. Documented examples of non-compliance with the Competition Act include:

promotion of tanning as healthy, promotion of a "base tan" to prevent sunburn, promoting artificial tanning to increase Vitamin D production as a health benefit, and misleading claims regarding declining melanoma statistics in Canada.

### **Recommendation:**

Doctors Nova Scotia should join the work already being done in this area and advocate to governments at all levels to pass comprehensive legislation regulating the artificial tanning industry, with a focus on banning access to artificial UV tanning equipment by those under 18 years of age. The association should continue to raise public awareness of skin cancer prevention by providing evidence-based information through its membership to patients and to families, through its website, promotions, relationships with schools, and by emphasizing the link between tanning beds and increased cancer risk.

If the motion is passed, the association will raise this issue with the provincial department of Health Promotion and Protection and with Health Canada. As well, it will become part of the health promotion priorities for the upcoming year.

Although Doctors Nova Scotia is focusing on the 18 years of age and under demographic, the association recognizes the dangers of tanning beds for individuals of all ages. Measures also need to be taken to protect adult users. Measures could include recommendations put forth in the Sun Safe Nova Scotia's 2005 report, Reducing the incidence of skin cancer in Nova Scotia, which suggests the following be created:

- a protocol for operating artificial tanning equipment;
- a protocol for standardized customer service and safety;
- a communication strategy to support regulations; and,
- the establishment of regulations for surveillance and enforcement.

### **(Endnotes)**

- 1 The World Health Organization recommends that no person under 18 should use a sunbed. World Health Organization Updated March 2005. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/notes/2005/np07/en/index.html>
- 2 The World Health Organization recommends that no person under 18 should use a sunbed. World Health Organization Updated March 2005. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/notes/2005/np07/en/index.html>
- 3 The Lancet Oncology Report. International Agency for Research on Cancer. Updated July 2009 <http://www.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2009/10-28/cpsc/02%20-%20ACS2009-CCS-CPS-0023%20Document5.htm>
- 4 The Lancet Oncology Report. International Agency for Research on Cancer. Updated July 2009 <http://www.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2009/10-28/cpsc/02%20-%20ACS2009-CCS-CPS-0023%20Document5.htm>
- 5 Tanning restrictions for minors. A state-by-state comparison. NCSL, National Conference of State Legislatures. Updated January 2010. <http://www.ncsl.org/IssuesResearch/Health/anningRestrictionsforMinorsstatelawsummary>.
- 6 California bans kids from tanning salons. Reuters Saturday September 25, 2004. <http://www.expressindia.com/news/fullstory.php?newsid=36533>
- 7 <http://www.procpblog.com/tanning-makes-skin-cancer-the-most-common-form-in-young-women>
- 8 Dellavalle RP, Parker ER, Cersonsky N, et al. Youth Access Laws. In the dark at the tanning parlor? *Arch Dermatol* 2003; 139:443-448.
- 9 Texas prohibits indoor tanning for minors. *Articlesbase.com* August 20 2009. Shared by [www.skininc.com](http://www.skininc.com). <http://www.articlesbase.com/health-articles/texas-prohibits-indoor-tanning-for-minors-1145300.html>.
- 10 Gara R. Sunbeds Cause Skin Cancer, Warns WHO. *HEALTH NEWS* 17 March 2005. <http://health.dailynewscentral.com/content/view/521/63>.
- 11 <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2008/en/08en05-d.htm>
- 12 <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2008/en/08en05-d.htm>
- 13 Solarium ban for under-18s and fair-skinned people, New South Wales, Australia. *Medical News Today*, April 11, 2008. <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/103748.php>
- 14 Cumberland S, Jurberg C. From Australia to Brazil: sun worshippers beware. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 2009 August; 87(8):574-575. doi: 10.2471/BLT.09.030809. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2733274>

Canadian Medical Association's 2010 General Council Tanning Bed Motions

DM 5-9 The Canadian Medical Association, in collaboration with provincial/territorial medical associations, will call on governments to strengthen labeling requirements on tanning equipment and require signage in tanning facilities that outlines the carcinogenic potential and overall health risks associated with tanning facilities.

Passed with 99 % in favour.

DM 5-10 The Canadian Medical Association, in collaboration with provincial/territorial medical associations, affiliate and associate organization and other stakeholders, will call on all levels of governments to regulate the artificial tanning industry, with a focus on banning access to children and youth under 18 years of age.

Passed with 98 % in favour