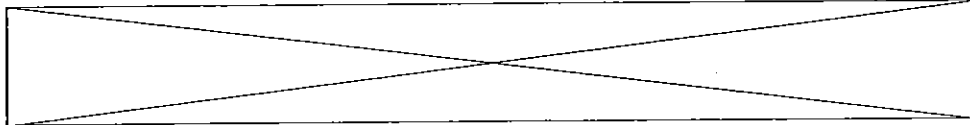


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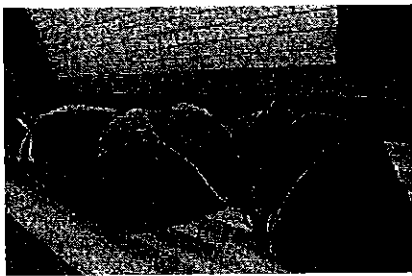
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Pediatricians Group Urges a Ban on Teens at Tanning Salons

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By MEREDITH MELNICK Monday, February 28, 2011 | 104 COMMENTS



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191 **Bad news for GTL'ers-in-training: the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) wants to ban teens from using UV tanning beds.**

In 2009, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the cancer division of the World Health Organization, classified tanning beds as "carcinogenic to humans" — the agency's highest cancer-risk category, which also includes radon gas and plutonium. The American Academy of Dermatology and the American Medical Association already also warn against using the beds. [\(More on Time.com: The Misunderstood Psychology of Fake Tanning\)](#)

The AAP is now joining these other agencies in its stance because of the particular risk of skin cancer in adolescent girls, who make up a large proportion of tanning salons' customer base. According to the AAP policy statement, there are 50,000 licensed tanning salons currently operating in the U.S., which receive 1 million visitors per day, 70% of whom are girls and women.

A May 2010 study found that the risk of melanoma was 74% higher in people who tanned indoors, compared with people who didn't use tanning beds. The risk is higher in people who start tanning young: the more years you spend indoor tanning, the higher your risk. Melanoma is currently the second most common type of cancer in women ages 20 to 29.

"Teen girls are frequent visitors," said Sophie Balk of the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in New York, who authored the AAP policy statement, in a press statement. "And the use increases the older a teen is — so a 17-year-old is much more likely than a 14-year-old to go to a tanning salon." [\(More on Time.com: In Young Tanners, Fear of Wrinkling Is Worse than Cancer\)](#)

More than 30 states regulate indoor tanning by minors, with some banning children younger than 14 or requiring parental permission. Illinois and New York are among states considering bills prohibiting anyone under 18 from indoor tanning, but the AAP wants to see bans across all state lines. It is encouraging its member physicians to become actively involved in legislative efforts to curb tanning bed use.

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