



## Press release

### **Sunbed Legislation and UV Education**

INTANZ, the newly formed Indoor Tanning Association of New Zealand agrees with the Cancer Society that introduction of sunbed legislation or regulation would be a positive move for the indoor tanning industry and the public provided it is developed in a collaborative and cooperative manner. Education about the benefits and risks of UV exposure (inside on a sunbed or outside from sunshine) is also key in our fight against melanoma and improving the health of New Zealanders.

One of INTANZ's main aims is to assist with raising the standard of practice of the indoor tanning industry in New Zealand. Legislation which promotes good tanning practices including sunburn avoidance and UV exposure appropriate to individuals' skin types would be beneficial to ensure the health and wellbeing of sunbed users.

There is risk with all activities in life. INTANZ also aims to help the public understand both the benefits and risks with sunbed use & UV exposure in order that they can make an informed choice. Last year the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) included sunbeds in Category 1. Reports that state this puts tanning beds in the same category as tobacco, arsenic and asbestos are scaremongering if they do not also state this is also the same category as red wine, beer, salted fish and of course sunshine.

A number of IARC studies show that there is no increased risk of getting melanoma when using sunbeds. Often reported is that the IARC studies highlight that if sunbed usage starts before age 30 the risk of melanoma is increased by 75%. When the palest skin types (skin type 1) who should not be using a sunbed are removed this study is also in line with other studies that shows NO increase in the risk of melanoma from sunbed use.

Whether you get your UV exposure inside on a sunbed or outside from the sunshine you should understand the benefits as well as the risks which are mostly related to sunburn, not the mere act of exposure itself. There is an ever increasing amount of validated scientific research that shows that UV exposure has a positive influence on human health. Some of the health benefits include

protection against breast, prostate & colorectal cancer, flu's & colds, depression, auto immune diseases and more.

In order to get these health benefits you need to maintain sufficient levels of vitamin D3 year round. A 2004 study in Christchurch showed that in February 88% of participants had levels of vitamin D3 below that deemed sufficient, this percentage rose to 100% having insufficient levels by June.

Scientific research has a long way to go before we have the full answers. What we do know is that over exposure and under exposure to UV both have health risks. INTANZ calls on New Zealanders to stop being afraid of the sun and sunbeds - start respecting them; never sunburn, regular moderate responsible exposure appropriate for your skin type is natural and healthy.

'Sunlight – do it right.'

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