

## A TAN TO DIE FOR



So you want a nice looking tan without the dangers of sun exposure and you think tanning beds are the way to go? Think again.

Exposure to any kind of ultraviolet radiation, whether from the sun or from tanning lamps, increases your risk of melanoma and other skin cancers. Tanning lamps are to skin cancer what cigarettes are to lung cancer.

Why are tanning lamps unsafe? Because they expose you to ultraviolet radiation, a known carcinogen (cancer-causing agent). There are two types of harmful ultraviolet. The first is UVB - it causes sunburns. The second is UVA, which doesn't burn but penetrates the skin more deeply than UVB and causes mutations of DNA within the genes of skin cells. Tanning beds expose you to the same intensity UVB as the sun and 10 to 13 times greater UVA intensity than the sun.

**If you are under age 30 and use tanning beds 10 times or more in a year your risk of developing melanoma is increased nearly 8 times. A single tanning bed session increases your risk of melanoma by 22%.**

Is there a safe way to get a tan?

Yes, by using a modern sunless bronzing lotion or spray, you can get a tan that cannot be distinguished from the killer tans produced by exposure to the sun or tanning lamps. Sunless tanners work by dyeing only the outermost layer of the skin. This layer consists of dead skin cells that are not harmed by the tanners. Spray booths, self-applied bronzers, and tanning moisturizers make it easy to get a safe, natural looking tan.

The key to getting a natural looking tan, without an orange color, is to avoid bronzers that are much darker than your natural skin tone and to build your tan in a few sessions rather than trying to do it all at once. The web site, [www.sunless.com](http://www.sunless.com), has complete instructions for selecting the right product and applying it effectively. Most sunless bronzers do not contain sunscreen so use appropriate protection to prevent exposure.

This information is provided by the Melanoma Education Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to saving lives from melanoma, a common and deadly skin cancer that affects young people as well as old. For more information visit the web-site [www.skincheck.org](http://www.skincheck.org).

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