

Be **SunSmart**.

See beyond the tan



www.sunsmart.org.uk

CANCER RESEARCH UK



About sunbeds

Using a sunbed just once or more a month could increase your chances of developing skin cancer by more than a half.

Sunbeds give out ultraviolet (UV) rays. They can cause damage to your skin which lasts long after your tan fades.

The UV rays from some sunbeds are 10–15 times stronger than those from the midday sun. They can damage the DNA in your skin, as well as ageing it and making it look wrinkled or leathery.

Who is most at risk?

Some people are more likely than others to develop skin cancer. You should avoid using a sunbed if you have:

- fair skin that burns easily
- red or fair hair
- lots of moles (more than 50) or freckles
- a personal or family history of skin cancer

People who start using sunbeds before the age of 35 have a 75% higher risk of developing melanoma than people who do not use them. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer.

It's against the law to allow people under the age of 18 to use sunbeds.

The facts about sunbeds

Sunbeds aren't a safe alternative to sunbathing

Sunbeds give off UV rays that damage DNA in your skin. Over time this damage can build up to cause melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer.

Every year, more than 900 people between the ages of 15 and 34 are diagnosed with melanoma in the UK. This makes it the second most common cancer in this age group.

A sunbed tan will not keep you safe in the sun

At most, a sunbed tan provides as much protection as a sunscreen with SPF of just 2 to 4. This is not enough to protect you from sunburn when the sun is strong.

Even if you don't burn, sunbeds aren't safe

Sunburn is a clear sign that you have harmed your skin. But sunbeds can be dangerous even if you do not burn. This is because they give off a type of radiation called UVA. UVA does not cause sunburn, but it can damage DNA. Over time this damage can cause skin cancer.

You don't need a sunbed to produce vitamin D

Vitamin D is essential for good health but you don't need a sunbed to make enough of it. The risks of sunbeds mean that they are not a good way of getting enough vitamin D.

Further information

About sunbeds and being SunSmart

Visit Cancer Research UK's SunSmart website
www.sunsmart.org.uk

About cancer

For more about cancer visit our Patient Information website at www.cancerhelp.org.uk

If you want to talk in confidence about cancer, call our information nurses on freephone 0808 800 4040

Order more leaflets

You can order our full range of leaflets free online at www.cancerresearchuk.org/leaflets

Support Cancer Research UK

If you would like to support our work please call 020 7121 6699 or visit www.cancerresearchuk.org