Position Statement on Indoor Tanning

INTRODUCTION/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The use of indoor tanning and artificial light devices is on the increase, especially among teens and young adults. There is now a known carcinogenic effect on humans related to the use of indoor tanning and other non-medical uses of artificial light. The DNA recognizes the urgent need to educate the public on these health risks causally linked to the use of indoor tanning devices and promotes an FDA ban on the manufacture, sale, and use of non-medical tanning equipment. Strict enforcement of current legislation involving the sale and use of indoor tanning equipment is required. Therefore, the Dermatology Nurses’ Association (DNA) promotes the ban of indoor tanning and other non-medical uses of artificial light.

RATIONALE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Indoor tanning lamps, including the use of non-medical artificial light sources such as sun lamps, that deliver ultraviolet radiation (UVR) are causally linked to multiple health hazards including skin and eye cancer risks. The immediate effects of exposure to artificial UVR through indoor tanning beds may include skin burns, gastrointestinal upset, photosensitivity, adverse reactions to prescribed or OTC medications, onset of photo-induced diseases such as polymorphous light eruption or pseudoporphyria, and worsening of existing photo-sensitive conditions such as rosacea, systemic lupus erythematosus, and polymorphus light eruption. The chronic effects of indoor tanning and non-medical artificial UVR include an increased risk for precancerous actinic keratoses and skin cancers including basal and squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma.

DNA POSITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The DNA recognizes the significant public health risks directly related to indoor tanning exposure and recommends the following:

* extensive public health education on the known carcinogenic effects and other associated health risks of artificial UVR and indoor tanning
* partnering with government, industry, agencies such as the CDC and AAD, other medical professionals, and schools to accomplish educational goals
* an FDA ban of all non-medical uses for artificial UVR including the cosmetic use of indoor tanning beds
* adequate funding to comply with strict enforcement of current indoor tanning guidelines and routine inspection of all indoor tanning equipment
* prohibit use by minors under the age of 18
* prominent display of warning signs listing the carcinogenic and health risks related to the use of indoor tanning beds
* signed statement by each client that explicitly describes the health risks of indoor tanning
* provision of sanitary eye protection for each client using indoor tanning facilities
* adequate training of all tanning device owners/operators that includes health risks of indoor tanning devices, safe operation and maintenance of equipment, recognition of UVR overexposure and emergency conditions, and first aid/emergency care for burns and UVR-related health injury i.e., disease exacerbations
* establish method to limit exposure time and alert client to end of tanning session
* prohibit public messages or advertisements promoting the “safety” of indoor tanning

REFERENCES:

American Academy of Dermatology (AAD)
National Center for Environmental Health of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (NCEH/CDC)

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Developing Authors: Sue McCann, Mary Fraser, Maryellen Maguire-Eisen
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