

facts:

1. More than 1700 Australians die every year from skin cancer.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Causes of death 2007. 3303.0. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, March 18 2009.

2. At least 2 in 3 Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer before the age of 70.

Staples M, Elwood M, Burton R, Williams J, Marks R, Giles G. Non-melanoma skin cancer in Australia: the 2002 national survey and trends since 1985. Medical Journal of Australia 2006; 184 (1): 6-10.

3. People who use a solarium before the age of 35 have a 75% greater risk of melanoma than those who don't use solariums.

International Agency for Research on Cancer Working Group on artificial ultraviolet light and skin cancer. The association of use of sunbeds with cutaneous malignant melanoma and other skin cancers: A systematic review. International Journal of Cancer 2007; 120:116-22.

4. In Australia, 281 melanoma cases, 43 melanoma-related deaths and 2572 new cases of squamous cell carcinoma were estimated to be attributable to solarium use each year.

Gordon LG, Hirst NG, Giles PHF, Green AC. What impact would effective solarium regulation have in Australia? Medical Journal of Australia 2008; 189 (7): 375-378.

5. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has moved ultraviolet emitting tanning beds to its highest cancer risk category: Group 1 'carcinogenic to humans'.

El Ghissassi F, Baan R, Straif K, Grosse B, Secretan B, Bouvard V, Benbrahim-Tallaa L, Guha N, Freeman C, Galichet L, Coglianov V. A review of human carcinogens - Part D: radiation. Lancet Oncology 2009; 10: 751-752.

For more information contact:

Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart program www.sunsmart.com.au

or talk to your doctor, skin specialist, school or university nurse or community health centre.



Slip on sun-protective clothing



Slop on SPF 30+ sunscreen



Slap on a hat



Seek shade when possible



Slide on some sunglasses



Tan from solarium.

Scar from skin cancer.

Solariums FASHION TO DIE FOR

Solarium regulations in Victoria: leading the way

Associate Professor
John Kelly,
Director of the Victorian
Melanoma Service, Alfred Hospital



Associate Professor John Kelly dispels the solarium myths.

• **Solarium tanning is safer than tanning in the sun. Not true**

Solariums emit harmful levels of UV radiation that can be up to three times as strong as the midday summer sun. This is the equivalent of the UV index being 36. (Generally, the highest UV index level in Victoria is 12).

• **If I build up my tan, I'll be protected from the sun. Not true**

A tan increases your risk of skin cancer and premature ageing.

• **A tan makes you look healthy. Not true**

A tan is a sign that the skin is getting UV radiation damage. It is not a sign of good health.

• **I need a tan for a special occasion. Not true**

A solarium emits a very powerful dose of UV radiation. If you must have a tan then use fake tanning products.

• **A solarium is a good way of getting my vitamin D. Not true**

Most Australians will receive enough vitamin D while doing normal day-to-day activities. Exposing your skin to extreme levels of UV radiation through a solarium is not safe. If you think you may be vitamin D deficient, speak to your doctor.

• **My skin is only damaged if I get burnt. Not true**

Tanning without burning can still cause skin damage, premature aging and can increase your risk of skin cancer.

“I assumed solariums were safe.”



26-year-old Kate McCammond says she is “100 per cent confident” that her melanoma was caused by using solariums. Why is she so sure? Because she developed a

melanoma on her bottom, and has never sunbaked naked or even in a g-string.

Kate first used a solarium when she was 17, and a few years later because she was working in a solarium, she had eight minute

sessions around three times a week for five years. In 2007, Kate saw a story about another solarium user who had developed a melanoma. Kate was shocked to see it looked just like the spot on her bottom.

Kate saw a dermatologist, who diagnosed the spot as a melanoma.

It was 2.5mm deep and a stage 4. “My dermatologist said if I'd left it any longer it could have spread.”

“It took two rounds of surgery to remove it all, and I had about 30 stitches in my bum,” Kate says.

Not only does she now have a scar as a legacy of her solarium sessions,

Kate has to have regular check ups for the next few years.

Kate says she would never use a solarium again and warns all her friends not to.

“If my story stops one person from using a solarium then my job's done.”

“My dermatologist said if I'd left it any longer it could have spread.”

“It's just not worth the risk.”



The melanoma scar on 27-year-old Kylie Bell's body is a permanent reminder of the dangers of solarium use.

Kylie began going to solariums at the age of 14 and mistakenly believed solariums

were a safe way to tan. A misconception that is dangerously untrue.

“During my most intense periods of solarium use I was going every second day over three weeks,” said Kylie. “At the solarium

they recommended four-minute long sessions, as I had pale skin, then I built up to 10-minute sessions.”

“As well as giving me what I thought was a better tan, it made me feel better about my body image.”

At the age of 25, after going to the solarium on and off over a 10-year period, Kylie noticed a dark mole on her rib cage that hadn't been there before.

The mole, which was about 2mm wide, slowly grew bigger and developed an even darker spot in the middle.

Kylie was initially told that the mole was

benign but her doctor recommended she get it checked again in six months time. Kylie considered not going back but is now thankful she did as the mole was found to be cancerous.

“I had the mole removed two days later, which was a very traumatic experience, and I now have a large scar. But what's really scary is that my risk of skin cancer is so much higher and I could get melanoma again.”

Kylie has a clear message for solarium users: “Don't use them, they're not worth it. There is no such thing as a safe tan whether it's from a solarium or in the sun.”

Victoria was the first state in Australia to introduce solarium regulations.

Victorians under the age of 18 and people with very fair skin are now banned from using solariums.

Victorian regulations also require operators to:

- be licensed with the Department of Health
- display mandatory health warnings
- complete a skin assessment of all clients
- provide a consent form outlining the risks of solarium use for clients to read and sign.

The Australian Standard AS/NZS 2635:2008 Solaria for Cosmetic Purposes, which covers the operation of solariums and provides best industry practice guidelines, also recommends that people with white skin who burn easily, and tan minimally (skin type II), should not use a tanning unit.