

Testimony
House Human Services Committee
House Bill 1188
Monday, January 21, 2013
North Dakota Department of Health

Good morning, Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Krista Headland and I am the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Department of Health's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control. I am here to provide you with information related to the link between the use of indoor tanning beds and skin cancer.

The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer announced in 2009 that it had moved UV tanning beds to its highest cancer risk category - "carcinogenic to humans." Prior to the move, the group had classified sun lamp and tanning bed use as "probably carcinogenic to humans."

Recent research published in 2010 from the University of Minnesota definitively links the use of indoor tanning beds to increased risk of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. The study involving over 2,000 Minnesotans is the largest of its kind. It found that people who use any type of tanning bed for any amount of time are 75 percent more likely to develop melanoma. The study also found that the more frequently tanning beds are used, the more likely the person will be to develop melanoma.

According to the North Dakota Statewide Cancer Registry, melanoma incidence rates nearly tripled from 2000-2009 in our state. Younger women between the ages of 20 to 44 have experienced the largest increases. A 2011 population-based study from Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, confirms a dramatic rise in skin cancer, especially in women younger than 40. The lead investigator, a Mayo Clinic dermatologist, stated, "The results of this study emphasize the importance of active interventions to decrease risk factors for skin cancer and, in particular, to continue to alert young women that indoor tanning has carcinogenic effects that increase the risk of melanoma."

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Survey, conducted in high schools across the nation including North Dakota, reports that 29 percent of white high school girls and 32 percent of girls in the 12th grade said they use indoor tanning beds. Other surveys indicate that white women in the Midwest have the highest tanning bed utilization rates of any region in the country.

The North Dakota Cancer Control Plan, which is carried out by the Department of Health's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, includes objectives designed to reduce UV exposure to prevent skin cancer among North Dakotans. One of our current projects is a "no tanning" pledge drive for North Dakota high school students, to educate them on the dangers of indoor tanning and discourage them from using indoor tanning beds before prom and other events. We have schools all across the state that will be implementing the "no tanning" pledge drive over the next couple of months.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide you with this information. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time. Thank you.