

# Artificial Tanning

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Artificial tanning (tanning beds) exposes the skin to ultraviolet (UV) radiation of which is known to be a human carcinogen (cancerous).

The [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) recommends that artificial tanning should not be used for cosmetic purposes and should only be done with the use of medical supervision. The WHO also recommends that no person under the age of 18 use artificial tanning equipment as these are the most important years for sun protection.

Exposure to UV radiation before the age of 18 greatly increases one's risk for developing skin cancer. Two sunburns before the age of 18 can double your chances of developing skin cancer.

Ultraviolet A radiation (UVA) in a tanning bed is two to three times higher than natural sunlight and UVA is responsible for premature aging and wrinkling of the skin.

## **UV radiation – A Definition**

UV radiation is made up of three types of rays – ultraviolet A (UVA), ultraviolet B (UVB), and ultraviolet C (UVC).

UVA and UVB rays penetrate the ozone layer and may cause skin cancer in persons with a history of sunburns and repeated exposure to ultraviolet radiation, both nature and artificial (tanning booths).

Although UVC is the most dangerous type of ultraviolet light in terms of its potential to harm life on earth, it cannot penetrate earth's protective ozone layer. Therefore, it poses no threat to human, animal or plant life on earth.