

# The Benefits to Healthy Tanning

Tanning has been unfairly considered a health evil, with regulatory agencies like the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) implementing a [tanning tax](#) and other policies against tanning products and services. But did you know what tanning really does to your overall health and wellness?

“Tanning is your body’s natural protection against sunburn; it’s what your body was created to do,” clarifies [Dr. Joseph Mercola](#), a natural health expert who advocates safe tanning for its [vitamin D](#) and other benefits.

## The Tanning-Exercise Analogy

According to Dr. Mercola, **calling a tan “damaged skin” is telling only part of the story**. In a good analogy used by the Indoor Tanning Association (ITA), this is much like saying that exercise damages muscles. During exercise, the tiny muscle fibers in your body actually tear. At first glance, this seems to be a form of damage. In truth, this tissue breakdown is your body’s way of naturally building stronger muscle tissue.

Similarly, tanning is your skin’s natural protective mechanism against the dangers of sunburn and further exposure. Avoiding sunburn remains crucial, whether it’s from the sun or from a safe tanning bed.

## Does Tanning Really Cause Skin Cancer?

Dr. Mercola adds that what increases your skin cancer risk is the burning of your skin and chronic excessive exposures, NOT limited and sensible exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light or sunlight.

The opposite could actually be true, says Dr. Mercola.

“[Melanoma](#), the most dangerous form of skin cancer, is actually more common in people who work indoors than in those who work outdoors. Further, melanoma most commonly appears on parts of your body that do not receive regular exposure to sunlight – and rarely occurs on your face,” he explains.

To date, no well-designed studies support the link between melanoma and UV exposure from tanning beds. In fact, the activated form of vitamin D – best obtained from sunlight exposure but can also be provided by safe tanning and supplementation – is one of the most effective ways to control abnormal cell growth.

Dr. William Grant and other notable researchers have published peer-reviewed articles vouching for this. ([Link](#)) In the United States, for example, increased sun exposure would result in 185,000 fewer annual cases of internal cancer and 30,000 fewer deaths from cancer of the breast, ovaries, colon, prostate, bladder, uterus, esophagus, rectum, and stomach.

This means that if you can't go outdoors for natural safe exposure, **safe tanning beds** are your best bet for receiving vitamin D and its health-promoting effects!

### **The How-To's of Healthy Tanning**

Here are some important safe tanning tips from Dr. Mercola:

- **Not enough sunlight? Use a safe tanning bed that emits UV rays**, helping produce the vitamin D you need.
- **Choose a safe tanning system that also has beneficial infrared, red, and blue lights** for potential relief of pain and stiffness, improved skin health, and relaxation.
- **Choose tanning beds wisely** to avoid the outdated and potentially harmful equipment from some tanning salons.

The tanning smear campaign will likely continue, but what makes more sense to you: the vilification, or the vitamin D and other benefits you can reap from a healthy tan?