

## Australian study finds sunbeds greatly increase the risk of melanoma

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(PhysOrg.com) -- A landmark Australian study has found that use of sunbeds by young people aged 18 to 39 years increased their risk of developing melanoma by an average 41 percent.

The Australian Melanoma Family Study is the first to examine the use of sunbeds and melanoma in younger adults.

The findings are the result of a research collaboration between the University of Sydney, University of Melbourne, Westmead Institute of [Cancer Research](#), Melanoma Institute Australia, Cancer Council Victoria and Cancer Council Queensland.

Co-author Professor Bruce Armstrong from the Sydney Medical School, said the study found that 23 percent of participants who had melanoma reported using a sunbed.

"Compared with participants who had never used a sunbed, those who had done so were 41 percent more likely to develop melanoma," he said.

"Those who had used a sunbed were much more likely to be female, tan easily, to be exposed to more sun on summer holidays during their lifetime, and to have lived in less sunny regions.

"Participants who began using sunbeds before 20 years of age or reported more than 10 sunbed sessions during their life doubled their risk of melanoma."

Senior author on the study and Melanoma Institute Australia Co-Director of Research, Professor Graham Mann said the increase in risk of melanoma was particularly striking for people under 30.

"Our findings indicate that sunbeds caused about three quarters of melanomas in sunbed users under the age of 30," he said.

"If we extrapolate to all cases of melanoma and not just those among people who had used a sunbed, we estimate that 16 percent of [melanoma](#) cases in patients aged 18-29 years and 3 percent in patients aged 30-39 years would be prevented by avoiding sunbed exposure.

"The dangers of using sunbeds are now well known, but there is a special message from this research for young people. Avoid them completely."

Provided by University of Sydney

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