

Relatives of melanoma patients ignore their skin cancer risk

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It is well known that sunbathing increases the risk of skin cancer and that this risk is increased in people with a family history of melanoma. New research published in BioMed Central's open access journal *BMC Public Health* shows that young people in this 'at risk' group are still ignoring sun safety advice.

Professor Sharon Manne at the Centre Cancer Prevention and Control Program, New Jersey, asked over 500 people with a family history of [melanoma](#), the most dangerous form of [skin cancer](#), whether they regularly sunbathed and whether they used sunscreen. Although most of these people were aware that sunscreen would protect them against cancer and premature aging, many of them still did not feel it necessary to use any form of sun protection.

Disturbingly she found that, despite their increased risk of melanoma, the younger women in this survey still viewed a tan as being healthy and were the most unlikely to use sunscreen. Professor Manne said, "To reduce the incidence of melanoma we need to reduce the perceived benefits of sunbathing and to increase to use of sun protection."

More information: Sun protection and sunbathing practices among at-risk family members of patients with melanoma, Sharon L Manne, Elliot J Coups, Paul B Jacobsen, Michael Ming, Carolyn J Heckman, and Stuart Lessin, *BMC Public Health* (in press)

Provided by BioMed Central

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