

Indoor tanning laws help keep teen girls away, study finds

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In states that had some restrictions in place, use of tanning beds dropped 30 percent.

(HealthDay)—Teen girls are less likely to go to indoor tanning salons if they live in states that restrict their use of tanning beds, a new study reveals.

Research has shown an association between the use of [tanning beds](#) and a raised risk of skin cancer later in life.

The study authors analyzed government data on U.S. [high school students](#) from 2009 and 2011, and found that about 23 percent of girls and 6.5 percent of boys engaged in [indoor tanning](#).

However, teen girls' use of indoor tanning was 30 percent lower in states with any indoor tanning laws than in those without any restrictions, the investigators found.

In states with "system access" laws (warning signs, limited advertising and mandated protective eyewear), and parental permission and age restriction laws, [teen girls](#)' use of indoor tanning was 42 percent lower than in states with no restrictions.

Having restrictions had no effect on teen males' use of indoor tanning, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study published online Feb. 13 in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

"State indoor tanning laws, especially age restrictions, may be effective in reducing indoor tanning among our nation's youth," study author Gery Guy, of the CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, said in an agency news release.

"We need to address the harms of indoor tanning, especially among children. Indoor tanning laws can be part of a comprehensive effort to prevent skin cancers and change social norms around tanned skin," Guy added.

Currently, six states (California, Illinois, Nevada, Oregon, Texas and Vermont) restrict indoor tanning use by people younger than 18, and a number of other states are either strengthening existing laws or considering new [restrictions](#), according to the CDC.

A U.S. Food and Drug Administration proposal would reclassify indoor tanning units from low- to moderate-risk devices, and recommends that no one younger than age 18 engage in indoor tanning.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more about [indoor tanning](#).

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