

CHILD SAFETY BLOG

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From Tragedy To Justice - Attorneys For The Injured

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Youth and Tanning Beds: Do Not Mix

By Patrick A. Malone

October 18, 2011

The groundswell against the use of tanning beds got an additional boost last week when California Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation prohibiting children younger than 18 from using the body-bronzers as of January 2012. California is the first state to enact such a ban.

In March, the American Academy of Pediatrics called for a tanning-bed ban for minors, and last year an FDA advisory committee made similar recommendations.

An increasing body of evidence says that the **risk of skin cancer from tanning beds** might be much higher than previously expected. According to the Journal of Investigative Dermatology, the ultraviolet rays produced by most tanning beds penetrate deeply into the skin, **causing significant damage**.

According to AboutLawsuits.com, some studies have shown that use of tanning beds by young adults results in eight times the risk of developing melanoma, a deadly form of skin cancer. A study by the World Health Organization indicated that use of tanning beds before the age of 30 might **increase the risk of skin cancer by 75%**.

The American Cancer Society says that melanoma is diagnosed in about 69,000 Americans each year and causes about 8,650 deaths annually. Melanoma is highly curable while it's confined to the skin, but once it penetrates deeper, it can go to the brain and other vital organs.

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A memorable client of Patrick Malone's died from **medical malpractice in the failure to remove a mole from his lower back before it turned into a fatal melanoma**. You can read about Richard Semsker in Malone's book, "**The Life You Save**," and on Patrick Malone's law firm website. Mr. Semsker's case had nothing to do with tanning beds, but shows how simple missteps in communications among his doctors could cause an unnecessary death.

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