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SECTION E

THE RECORD
LIFE & *trends*

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MONDAYS: *Learning* • TUESDAYS: *Life on the Run* • WEDNESDAYS: *Life at Home* • THURSDAYS: *Trends* • FRIDAYS: *Health*

SHORTER IS HOT
Men's swimwear
goes high-thigh

Here comes the Sun

Sun-seekers eager to avoid health risks turn to instant tans to get that glow

By VIKKI CONWELL

Summer is quickly approaching, and nothing will accessorize those vibrant, cool fashions better than a copper complexion. But how to obtain a bronzed body without becoming one of the more than one million people diagnosed with skin cancer each year remains a challenge for many tanning enthusiasts.

"Let's face it, tans look good," said David Lane, a dermatology surgical fellow at Emory University School of Medicine.

"But if it's going to make you have more wrinkles, bad skin and possibly skin cancer, it's an easy decision."

Lying outside for up to three hours damages the skin, and tanning beds emit ultraviolet rays that are harmful, according to the American Cancer Society. Tanning pills contain substances that have been linked to various side effects such as hepatitis.

"The only safe way to tan is to rub it on or spray it on," said Rutledge Forney, a dermatologist and member of the Georgia Association of Dermatologists.

Most tanning parlours offer machine- or self-applied sprays. The Food and Drug Administration recommends that you cover your face in addition to your hair so the spray doesn't get on your lips or in your eyes, nose or mouth.

But thanks to a growing number of sunless tanning products, you can do it yourself without putting your health at risk. Recent improvements allow for easier application and create a more natural look.

In 45 minutes to an hour, you can smooth, swipe or spray on a light bronze glow or a deep, dark tan. (It takes about three hours if you include drying time.)

The products are safe and have a low potential for allergic reaction, said Lane, referring to products containing the tanning chemical dihydroxyacetone.

"You can bathe in the stuff and still be fine," he said.

PUT IT ON

Sunless tanning is safer but not necessarily simple. Here are some things to keep in mind.

- Allow yourself enough time. You'll need about two to three hours before you can put on street clothes.
- Keep everything you need handy. Essentials include a place to take a shower or bath, a cotton washcloth to exfoliate your skin, soap and skin lotion. You'll need a loose outfit or robe to wear while the self-tanner is drying.
- Choose a light- or medium-toned tanner, which tends to look more natural.
- Before applying the product, wash and exfoliate your skin

to remove excess dead skin cells. You should shave your legs, but wait awhile before applying the tanner to avoid irritating your skin.

- Apply the tanner evenly and lightly. Use less on dry or thickened skin, such as over your ankles, knees and elbows, because they absorb more product.
- After applying the tanner to your face and body, wash your hands with soap and water to avoid colouring your palms. Be sure to remove any product from under your fingernails. Then use a cotton ball to apply the sunless tanner to the top of each hand.

TAKE IT OFF

You goofed. Now what?

- Orange, uneven, unnatural face: Do nothing. A sunless tan doesn't last long on the face and neck. Within 24 hours, it should be gone.
- Blotchiness: Apply a beta hydroxy acid solution before going to bed. Or massage dry baking soda onto your damp skin, rubbing in small, gentle circles.
- Orange body: Soak in the tub. Continue bathing or soak in a pool every day until the tan is gone.
- Stained palms. Apply body-hair bleach to stained areas and leave on for 10 minutes; wash off.
- Dark ankles, wrists, and knees. Wipe with two per cent beta hydroxy acid lotion or hydrogen peroxide. Reapply once a day to small areas to lighten the tan. Test in a small area first because it might irritate your skin.

• Mayo Clinic, American Tanning Institute, Sunless.com

PERFECT HANDS AND FEET

These are two of the hardest parts to sunless tan. Try the following:

With a lotion: Put a dab of lotion in one hand and rub it over both hands and wrists as if you were putting on hand lotion. Wipe palms on a damp washcloth. Clean nails and cuticles with a cotton swab dipped in liquid eye makeup remover; skin toner or nail polish remover.

After 10 minutes, rub your hands and wrists with hand lotion, and wipe off palms and fingernails again with washcloth.

With a spray or mousse: Squirt tanner into a small bowl or saucer. Rinse hands if needed. Let the mousse melt into a liquid. Using a medium-sized cosmetic brush, paint the liquid onto the back of hands and fingers. Go between fingers, but don't get any on the palms.

• Associated Press

SUN TALK MAY 31

How do you have fun in the sun while still protecting your skin?

Dr. Kenneth Kobayashi, a local dermatologist, will address that question at a talk on May 31 at the Kitchener Public Library.

The session offers information on the benefits and potential risks of sun exposure; how to recognize the signs of sun damage and skin cancers; and how to protect skin during sports and outdoor recreation.

Kobayashi will also discuss the myths and truths of sunscreen and what to look for in sun protective clothing for adults and children.

Admission to the event is free. It will be held in the library's main auditorium from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

For more information, call 749-4300, ext. 2252.

Kobayashi will also deliver the presentation in Guelph on June 1. He will be at the Evergreen Seniors Centre, 683 Woolwich St., from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

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DID YOU KNOW?

- A person has received 80 per cent of her lifetime sun exposure by the time he or she snuffs out 18 candles atop a birthday cake. The statistic highlights the need for parents to apply sunscreen on their children.

- SPF stands for sun protection factor. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends people apply at least an SPF 15 sunscreen.

- T-shirts offer limited protection: in reality, the fabric provides the equivalent of an SPF 4 sunscreen.

- Use a broad-spectrum UVA and UVB sunscreen lotion, gel or sun stick with an SPF 15 or higher. Re-apply every two hours (even on cloudy days), or more often if engaging in physical activities or swimming.

- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before heading outdoors.

- Traditional sunscreens, with their chemical smells and skin irritants, used to be the bane of pool-going kids. Today, sunscreen manufacturers produce formulas that incorporate fruity summer scents and bold colours. Check out the latest long-lasting, waterproof and sweat-proof versions that come in easy-application spray bottles and wipes designed for kids.

• Cox News Service

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