

Knowledge, Perceptions, and Practices Regarding Tanning, Sun Protection, and Skin Cancer among Young Adults in a Southeastern Coastal Population

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Background

Artificial and natural tanning practices have been associated with skin cancers, but young adults are still likely to engage in these behaviors. The objective of this study is to describe the association of natural ultraviolet exposure and tanning lamp use with the perceived risks and benefits associated with such practices.

Methods

A survey was administered to young adults seeking care at the MUSC Family Medicine Clinic over a 9 month period. A total of 75 surveys were collected during this time period. The validated survey was designed to evaluate perceptions about and frequency of tanning lamp use, the occurrence of adverse outcomes resulting from artificial ultraviolet light exposure, perceptions regarding natural sun exposure and use of protective measures. Demographic information was collected including age, gender, and geographical location during childhood. Survey respondents were also asked to classify their skin type using the Fitzpatrick classification provided on the questionnaire.

Results

Participant demographics, attitudes, and knowledge of risks regarding natural and artificial ultraviolet light exposure will be presented.

Conclusion

Both artificial and natural tanning are common practices among young adults, and knowledge about risks is important for overall health and wellness.