

Noncompliance with State Laws Prohibiting Minor Indoor Tanning (IT): Nationwide Assessment of Minors' Ability to Book IT Sessions Online

Jessica Dai, BS¹, Anna Mitarotondo, MS², Ileana Gonzales, BS³, Phoebe Gruetter, BA²,
Melissa Goldstein, MS², Dave Buller, PhD⁴, Carolyn Heckman, PhD²

¹Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Piscataway, NJ; ²Rutgers Cancer Institute, New Brunswick, NJ;

³Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, PA; ⁴Klein Buendel, Inc, Golden, CO

IT is a significant risk factor for skin cancer among young adults. Online booking may facilitate greater access to tanning services. This provides an opportunity to circumvent state laws restricting minor access to IT. This is the first study evaluating online booking among US IT facilities. IT facility websites were assessed for online booking availability, age verification, parental consent requirements, tanning service options, and safety information. Facility type, state IT laws, and geographic region were compared and analyzed using Fisher's exact and chi-square tests performed with R. Websites were identified for 130 of 504 (24.6%) IT facilities; 42 (33.9%) offered online booking. Only 10% of online booking sites requested age, and 12% included parental consent requirements. 83% allowed scheduling the highest tanning intensity, despite only 21% including safety or sunburn warnings. Online booking was disproportionately offered in the Northeast and West, versus the Midwest and South ($p < 0.001$). IT salon websites were more likely than other facility types (gyms, spas) to include safety protocols (54% vs. 27%, $p < 0.01$) or sunburn warnings (40% vs. 7%, $p < 0.001$). Parental consent or accompaniment requirements were infrequently listed regardless of facility type (15%). Online booking is available to youth and frequently permits scheduling of high intensity IT with minimal age verification or safety warnings, despite state laws. A study limitation is not confirming facility law compliance in person. Findings suggest state laws are not reflected in online booking and highlight opportunities to strengthen safeguards to improve compliance with youth tanning laws and promote skin cancer prevention. This project is supported by NJ ACTS CREST Program funded by NIH R25TR004777.

Online Booking of Indoor Tanning (IT): Risks for Youth Access and Gaps in Legal Safeguards

