



## Salon Injuries & Prevention

Tanning salons thrive on customer experience and reputation. A bodily injury is not the desired customer experience! Word of mouth spreads fast, and a negative customer experience could have a widespread and ongoing impact on the continued success of the salon. By evaluating bodily injury claims at tanning salon, one can effortlessly identify that most of the injuries are preventable, and more likely than not, caused by someone not paying enough attention or not following safe indoor tanning practices.

### Common Bodily Injuries at Tanning Salons

Slip, Trip & Falls

Burns

Allergic Reactions

Chemical Burns

Eye Injuries

Lacerations and Abrasions

### Eye Injuries

The importance of wearing protective eyewear can not be overstated. Federal regulations (CFR 21 1040.20 (c) (4)) require that tanners wear protective eyewear that blocks 99.9% of the UVB light and 99% of the UVA light. It is the operator's responsibility to ensure that the customers use compliant eyewear. Acceptable eyewear must state the product's compliance with federal regulations on the package. Some states require salons provide eyewear free of charge, while others only require that clients wear compliant eye protection, which the salon can sell or provide at no charge. <sup>1</sup>

Customers who have had UVB overexposure to the eyes will experience swelling of the eye tissues, redness, soreness, and a feeling as though a handful of sand has been thrown in their eyes. The pain usually starts a number of hours after the tanning session and can last for several days. This is the most common reason that tanners seek medical attention after a single tanning session. The FDA reports that over 12,000 tanners per year seek medical attention due to cornea burns from a single tanning session. Color perception is the first thing to fail with overexposure to UVA. Color vision loss is permanent and there is no surgery or drug to regain color vision. <sup>1</sup>

Always ask customers if they have their eye protection with them and ask to see it. Remind the customers that towels, sunglasses, cotton balls, and their eyelids do not adequately protect their eyes from damage. Eyewear must fit properly to be effective. UV light must not be able to seep in around the corners of the eyewear. The elastic strap that comes with goggles is provided to insure a tight fit. Do not let customers risk damaging their eyes to eliminate tan lines. There are types of protective eyewear which fit on each eye in order to eliminate tan lines created from the bridge of the glasses or elastic strap; however these should not be used in vertical booths. Never allow the use of cracked, pitted or discolored eyewear. <sup>1</sup>

Eyes are too valuable to risk damaging. Tanning salon owners are responsible for each customer's eye safety. This is a responsibility that should always be taken seriously! <sup>1</sup>

### Struck By Equipment

Customers being struck by tanning bed tops or contact with cracks in the acrylic shields are also common sources of preventable bodily injuries at tanning salons. These injuries include lacerations, abrasions, bone fractures, and even traumatic brain injuries.



## Why tanning bed tops will not stay up or down?

**Problem with the Gas Shocks** If the top of the bed will not stay up or down, there is most likely a problem with the gas shocks. A properly installed gas shock should have the cylinder body portion of the gas shock (the fat part) connected to the top of the tanning bed and the shaft (the skinny part) connected to the bottom. Verify that the gas shocks are installed properly before replacing the shocks. Most gas shocks are designed to hold the top in the up or down position, and not in any position in between. Replace gas shocks, when the shocks are determined to be properly installed and will not hold the top in the up or down position.

**Incorrect Acrylic Shields** The top acrylic shield is usually thinner, thus lighter than the bottom shield.

Rotating the acrylic shields is not recommended

*Please Note: Do not leave tanning beds in the exposure (down) position between use. This wears out the shocks at least twice as fast.<sup>1</sup>*

## When to replace acrylic shields?

Waiting until the acrylic shield beaks before replacement can be a big and costly mistake. Even if the acrylic shield appears to be in good condition (free of cracks, marks, etc.), over time the acrylic shields lose their UV light protection properties, which can lead to misjudgments of tanning limits and overexposure in another tanning bed. Most acrylics should be replaced every 1500-3000 hours.

**Light Meter** Test the effectiveness of the acrylics by using a light meter to check the UV transmission with the acrylic on. Then remove the acrylic and retake the UV transmission measurement. An effective acrylic shield should provide a 20% or greater reduction in UV transmission when compared to a direct reading from tanning bulb. If the acrylic shield is offering less than a 20% reduction, you should consider replacing the acrylic shield.

**Broken/Cracked Acrylic Shields** Shields should be immediately replaced once a crack is observed. Waiting for the crack to be large enough pinch a customer is not a good idea, and will more likely that not result in a bodily injury to a customer or further damage to the tanning bed.

### Protect Acrylic Shields

- To prevent premature cracking, make sure that the tanning bed has all of the acrylic supports properly installed and only use acrylic shields designed specifically for the tanning bed. Inspect supports regularly to make sure that they are not loose or cracked.
- Only make use of disinfectants and cleaners that are acrylic safe. Most home cleaning products are damaging to acrylics. Clean the acrylics regularly with products designed help prevent build up, remove scratches, and help prolong the life of acrylic materials.
- Make sure that all of the internal cooling fans are functional. Defective fans can cause hot spots in the tanning bed that may warp the acrylic shields overtime.
- Do not allow customers to use tanning products that are not designed for use in indoor tanning equipment.

#### REFERENCES:

1. National Tanning Training Institute (NTTI), Training for the Professional Operation of Indoor Tanning Salons 2015/2016

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