

Risks and benefits of sun exposure need a holistic view

Brussels, 01 June 2017 – There are clear benefits to moderate and controlled exposure to sunlight, while sun avoidance has negative effects on human health. This is the conclusion of a recent [study](#) looking at the link between insufficient sunlight exposure and global mortality.¹

The researchers followed more than 20,000 women in Sweden, categorized in three groups according to their degree of sun exposure. They found that the mortality rate was twice as high in those women who avoided sun exposure as in women more exposed to the sun.

This new study adds to a large body of literature documenting the beneficial effects of Vitamin D and the risks associated with Vitamin D deficiency which affects a large part of the European population, especially at northern latitudes. Recent studies have demonstrated the positive effect on bone health of vitamin D induced by ultraviolet (UV) light, and the fact that controlled but regular UV exposure lowers the risk of developing chronic diseases.²

In terms of public health, the researchers conclude that it is necessary to educate people about the harmful effects of both excessive and insufficient sun exposure. For this reason, dermatologists should also recommend most patients get sufficient sun exposure, which is part of a healthy lifestyle, combined with a varied diet and moderate physical activity.

Frank Harbusch, Secretary General of the European Sunlight Association (ESA), said: “Sun is life. We have been promoting moderate UV light exposure – be it by spending time outdoor or using indoor tanning devices – for years and were aware of the positive effects. I am happy to see more and more researchers now also looking at the benefits of sunlight and hence also the importance of vitamin D for our body.”

About the European Sunlight Association

The European Sunlight Association (ESA) is the voice of the European indoor tanning industry. It represents national indoor tanning associations and leading manufacturers of indoor tanning equipment.

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¹ Monserrat-García MT, Ortíz-Prieto A., Martín-Carrasco P, Conejo-Mir-Sánchez J. FR – Exposición solar insuficiente y mortalidad global: ¿debemos recomendar o desaconsejar la exposición solar a nuestros pacientes?. *Actas Dermosifiliogr.* 2017; 108:257-258.

² Gröber U, Reichrath J., Holick MF. Live longer with vitamin D? *Nutrients.* 2015 ; 7 : 1871-80.