

*Be the Fairest of
Them All*

Florence Nightingale Museum Youth Panel

Introduction

In August 2015, the Florence Nightingale Museum Youth Panel worked on a project to examine the notions of beauty, pallor and sun damage for young people today to link into 'The Kiss of Light' exhibition.

As part of the project they researched the effects of the sun, dangers of tanning, societies perceptions and pressures on young people; talked to friends about how they felt; worked with poet Simon Barraclough to write their own poem about the sun.

As a result of their work they have produced this information pack for young people to give them facts and advice about the sun.

Stephanie Tyler, Perseverance Manager for Learning and Access.

Sun Basics

The 4.5 billion years old sun emits radiation in the form of UV radiation. There are two types of UV radiation:

- **UV A**

Penetrates deep into the skin, causing ageing. UV A can penetrate through window glass to damage skin

- **UV B**

Damages surface of the skin with strong links to multiple types of cancers

Most UV radiation is deflected back into space by clouds or absorbed by the atmosphere. The rest reaches earth and thus to us humans.

"I like to be tanned. People always comment on how much better I look when I'm tanned. I think I look a bit dead when I am pale."



“I have gone lobster red a few times.”

The sun's effect on skin

- The sun can also provide essentials to people. First, controlled exposure to sunlight helps the body absorb vitamin D which we need to help regulate calcium and phosphates. Vitamin D and sun exposure prevents the development of rickets in young children which was a common illness in the 20th century due to lack of healthy sun exposure.
- Tanning is the result of the pigment melanin. The pigment absorbs the radiation so that the radiation does not reach your tissue deeper into the skin. Melanin does protect against the sun, but it is also a sign that you have too much exposure to these UV rays.
- There is also reason to believe that this damage affects the immune system in the skin, reducing its ability to identify and attack newly forming skin cancer cells.



Fair and Beautiful OR *Frais and Bronze?*

- Tanning, paleness and celebrity endorsement have long held a controversial spot in the media and have had an undeniable impact upon society's opinion about beauty in relation to tanning. For a long time, there was a distinct pressure in the media to possess a golden complexion.
- We often associate a glowing complexion and tan with good health and good looks. But tanning received from the sun's rays actually accelerates the effects of ageing and increases your risk of cancer.
- We have to consider that the celebrities who obtain all year round shimmering glows have professionals and a flowing source of wealth to pay for their youthful glow by whatever means necessary.
- Paris Hilton reportedly even bought her own airbrush tanning machine and had her assistant trained in how to use it!

"I like the fact I am pale. It suits me and I wouldn't want to be any other way. "



Beauty and The Sun

“I like to be tanned, but I prefer to use suns or creams to get a glow. I don’t want to risk my health to feel a bit more confident about the way I look. “

- In recent years there has been a step away from more traditional ideas about beauty and the sun.
- There is increased appreciation of alabaster skin which has been endorsed by many female celebrities, including Nicola Roberts from Girls Aloud who launched her own make-up range for fair skinned girls called Dainty Doll from Asos.com in 2011.
- The recent increase and significance of beauty gurus on the social media video sharing website YouTube has increased knowledge of safe alternatives such as fake tan for those who continue to desire the sun kissed glow without the risks of skin damage.
- It is unfortunately clear from conversations with friends and family that some ideas about tanning from previous media are entrenched and consequently the journey to defeat the pressures placed upon young people to achieve the tanned look will not disappear overnight.
- We believe there is every reason to be positive for the future with more steps from celebrities and people from around the world alike showing more support and appreciation for the idea of being comfortable in your own skin, whether naturally pale or naturally tanned.



You and Your Skin

- Fair skin with all its fairness is a victim to the sun above all other skin types. People with certain skin types are more likely at risk of skin cancer such, as those with very fair skin and red or fair hair.
- However, even if you are not fair skinned you are still not off the hook! Skin cancer can affect anyone, regardless of skin colour, hair colour or other features.
- The Fitzpatrick Skin Type is a skin classification system first developed in 1975 by Thomas Fitzpatrick, MD, of Harvard Medical School. His skin classification system and its adaptations are familiar to dermatologists. In order to determine your Fitzpatrick Skin Type, our quiz measures two components (genetic disposition and reaction to sun exposure). Types range from the very fair to the very dark. Take the test on the next page to determine your skins sensitivity to sun exposure!

"It makes you look more out-doorsy if you are tanned. I've tried to tan, but I just go from pale to red and back again. I've given up now. All about the factor 50 hype."



Genetic Disposition Test

Your eye colour is:

Light blue, light gray or light green = 0

Blue, gray or green = 1

Hazel or light brown = 2

Dark brown = 3

Brownish black = 4

Your natural hair colour is:

Red or light blonde = 0

Blonde = 1

Dark blonde or light brown = 2

Dark brown = 3

Black = 4

Your natural skin colour (before sun exposure)

is:

Ivory white = 0

Fair or pale = 1

Fair to beige, with golden undertone = 2

Olive or light brown = 3

Dark brown or black = 4

How many freckles do you have on unexposed areas of your skin?

Many = 0

Several = 1

A few = 2

Very few = 3

None = 4

Total score for genetic disposition:



Reaction to Sun Exposure Test

How does your skin respond to the sun?

Always burns, blisters and peels = 0
Often burns, blisters and peels = 1
Burns moderately = 2
Burns rarely, if at all = 3
Never burns = 4

Does your skin tan?

Never -- I always burn = 0
Seldom = 1
Sometimes = 2
Often = 3
Always = 4

How deeply do you tan?

Not at all or very little = 0
Lightly = 1
Moderately = 2
Deeply = 3

My skin is naturally dark = 4

How sensitive is your face to the sun?

Very sensitive = 0
Sensitive = 1
Normal = 2
Resistant = 3
Very resistant/Never had a problem = 4

Total score for reaction to sun exposure: _____

Add up your genetic disposition and sun exposure totals to find your Fitzpatrick Skin Type: _____



Your Results:

Type 1 (0-6 points): You always burn and never tan in the sun. You are extremely susceptible to skin damage as well as cancers. You are also at very high risk for melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer. Seek the shade whenever you are out in the sun. Check your skin head-to-toe each month, paying careful attention to any suspicious growths, and make sure you have an annual professional skin check-up.

Type 2 (7-12): You almost always burn and rarely tan in the sun. You are highly susceptible to skin damage as well as cancers. You are also at high risk for melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer. Seek the shade whenever you are out in the sun. Check your skin head-to-toe each month, paying careful attention to any suspicious growths, and make sure you have an annual professional skin check-up.

Type 3 (13-18): You sometimes burn and sometimes tan in the sun. You are susceptible to skin damage as well as cancers. You are also at risk for melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer. Seek the shade between 10 AM and 4 PM, when the sun is strongest. Check your skin head-to-toe each month, paying careful attention to any suspicious growths, and make sure you have an annual professional skin check-up.



Your Results cont.:

Type 4 (19-24): You tend to tan easily and are less likely to burn. But you are still at risk; use sunscreen with an SPF of 15+ outside and seek the shade between 10 AM and 4 PM. Check your skin head-to-toe each month, paying careful attention to any suspicious growths, and make sure you have an annual professional skin check-up.

Type 5 (25-30): You tan easily and rarely burn, but you are still at risk. Acral lentiginous melanoma, a very virulent form of the disease, is more common among darker-skinned people. These melanomas tend to appear on parts of the body not often exposed to the sun, and often remain undetected until after the cancer has spread. Check your skin head-to-toe each month, paying careful attention to any suspicious growths, and make sure you have an annual professional skin check-up.

Type 6 (31+ points): Although you do not burn, dark-skinned people are still at risk for skin cancers, and should wear sunscreen and seek the shade between 10 AM and 4 PM. Acral lentiginous melanoma, a very virulent form of the disease, is more common among darker-skinned people. These melanomas tend to appear on parts of the body not often exposed to the sun, and often remain undetected until after the cancer has spread. Check your skin head-to-toe each month, paying careful attention to any suspicious growths, and make sure you have an annual professional skin check up. Keep an eye out for any suspicious growths, especially on the palms, soles of the feet and mucous membranes.



Tips and Tricks to prevent Skin Cancer

Stay out of the sun

- If you notice your skin reddening, take cover.
- On days with a high UV Index (over 4) stay inside from 10 am to 4 pm
- Check your local news for the UV Index for the day

Wear protection

- This can include a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses or a sun umbrella if you really want to stay fair and beautiful.
- Sunscreen with an SPF over 30 and with four + UV A stars

Don't expose yourself to sun beds

- some salons might try to convince you of their new bulbs are safe and some UV exposure is critical for vitamin D.
- A single session can go wrong and directly cause melanoma, a skin cancer

Keep infants out of direct sunlight

- Infants skin posses little melanin. Therefore babies are especially vulnerable to the sun's damaging effect
- Take responsibility and cover them up!



Sunbeds

Did you know?

- Sunbed tanning is no safer than sun tanning. Both can lead to skin cancer.
- Young people, especially teenagers, are sensitive to UVR emitted from tanning booths.
- Frequent and prolonged exposure to ultraviolet rays over many years is the chief cause of skin cancer.
- Spending more time on sunbeds will not make your tan look any better.



A true account of talking to the sun at the Florence Nightingale Museum

The Sun woke me this morning
a little late, with a shove, a tug
And pulling of covers away;
leaving my pyjamed body vulnerable to attack.

The sun didn't wake me this morning.
It sulked behind an overcast of grey yuk,
giving me the silent treatment. I
responded: "@x!!" "@xivav!!"

The sun scowled, folded his arm
and raised an eyebrow: "Haven't you got things to do today?"

The sun bawled, "Why does everybody hate me?"
All you people do is look down at your screens
and never at me. I might as well not come up today!"

The Sun forced the light beneath
My briar-thorned eyes and burnt
a bright daylight into me.

And so began August 14th, 2015.

