

nausea, vomiting, sexual side effects, or other side effects. Some reports have also suggested they might increase the risk of premature aging of the skin and skin cancers.

Tanning nasal sprays

Tanning nasal sprays are also not approved by the FDA. Since these products aren't regulated, it's not always clear what they contain. Like tanning shots, most contain melanotan and possibly other chemicals. They can have the same side effects as tanning shots and are not considered safe to use.

Tanning accelerators

Tanning accelerators might come in the form of lotions or pills. They might contain the amino acid tyrosine or its derivatives. These have not been shown to work and may be dangerous. Marketers say these products stimulate the body's own tanning process, but most evidence suggests they don't work. **The FDA considers them unapproved new drugs that have not been shown to be safe and effective.**

Spray tans and tanning lotions

Other types of sunless tanning products include spray tans, tanning lotions, and bronzing lotions for the entire body or parts of the body, such as the face and neck. These are also known as **self-tanners** or **extenders**. Some companies offer sunless tanning through the use of moisturizers, makeup products, brush-on powders, and wipe-on towels. These are considered cosmetics for use on the skin.

Sunless tanning products applied to the skin interact with proteins on the surface of the skin to produce a darker color. Like a tan, the color tends to wear off after a few days. Many of these products use an FDA-approved color additive for sunless tanners called **dihydroxyacetone (DHA)**.

These products are not thought to be harmful when used properly, however DHA is approved for external use only. These products should **not** be:

- Breathed in through the nose or mouth
- Swallowed
- Sprayed or applied in areas that have mucous membranes (eyes, nose, lips)

If you are considering a sunless tanning product, talk to your doctor. Keep in mind that

most sunless tanning products do not contain sunscreen. Because of this, they may not offer protection against UV rays. Even if they do contain sunscreen, the protection is only effective for a couple of hours. Read the label carefully to know if a product provides any UV protection. As always, it's safest to continue to use sunscreen and wear protective clothing when going outside.

Hyperlinks

1. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/sun-and-uv/uv-radiation.html

References

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