



Why Aren't YOU Wearing Eyewear?

by Brenda Fishbaugh

Salon owners often ask me to share information they can relay to their tanners about how damaging tanning without eye protection really is. Instead of preaching, I thought I might share some thoughts of actual tanners that were posted on a message board. This is an actual thread where tanners discussed how unprotected tanning sessions damaged their eyes.

Tan Exotic: I admit it, I am RELIGIOUS about wearing eyewear in tanning beds, so I don't need lectures, but today I completely forgot and there was only one minute left on my delay time so I didn't wanna be a pain and ask for something at the counter (I didn't have cash either) so I just went without eyewear. BIG mistake. My eyes are burning like I walked into a room full of onions. Has anyone else experienced this? Should I be worried? Also, is there anything I can do to ease the pain? AH, I'm never EVER going without eyewear again.

Island Girl: Eye drops will help with the grainy feeling. Or try teabags on your eyes.

Teeny Bikini: Luckily, you didn't do any permanent damage, but at least you learned a lesson!

Dolphin: I would never tan without eyewear. How about carrying a pair of

disposable eyewear in your wallet so you are protected the next time you forget?

Tantalizingly Tan: I did this once as well, back when I first started tanning. My eyes watered for hours.

Columnist's Note: The tanners above are describing "Photokeratitis", a common occurrence also called a "corneal burn", "welder's "flash" and "snow blindness".


Salons: If you'd like a FREE eight-page booklet showing eye damage from unprotected tanning that you can share with your tanners, email Brenda@EyePro.net with your mailing address.

Your corneal tissue has no melanin (doesn't tan), so it burns and peels. That "sand in your eyes" feeling is your cornea peeling. The pain can last for several hours or days, just like a sunburn. Eyes often turn red, weep and can't be opened. Eye drops and tea bags provide very little relief; any serious burn will require medical attention. Your doctor has two things you will need - fabulous pain-killing drops and antibiotic drops to keep you from getting a serious eye infection. Your cornea does weaken every time you burn it.

Super Suntan: You guys are nuts. I've never worn eyewear and I've never had any of these problems.

Gotta Tan: My salon showed me some pictures of eye damage from intense UV light. Did you know that tanning beds can ruin your night vision if you don't wear eyewear when you tan? There isn't any drug or surgery to get it back, Super Suntan!

Bronze Goddess: Super Suntan, it's so easy to wear eyewear, why don't you? It's like wearing a seat belt, it is good

insurance. I just move my eye protection around a bit so I don't get tan lines. I'd rather wear eyewear and maybe use a little sunless to touch up any tan lines than use a Seeing Eye dog! 



About the Author:

Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels extensively training salons on the effects of UV light on vision.