



Canadian Cancer Society  
Société canadienne du cancer

Join the fight.

1 888 939-3333 | www.cancer.ca

## Canadian Cancer Society releases election policy recommendations and issues call to action

20 June 2011  
TORONTO -

The Canadian Cancer Society is calling on the government of Ontario and all political parties, if elected, to commit to restrict indoor tanning by youth under the age of 18. The recommendation is included in the Canadian Cancer Society's election policy recommendations released today.

Every three minutes, another Canadian is faced with fighting cancer. Empowered by its volunteers, staff and donors – the Canadian Cancer Society is working tirelessly to do everything it can to prevent cancer, save lives and support people living with cancer. Now the Society is **asking for the help of all Ontario voters**, to question their provincial candidates on where they stand on fighting cancer on the following key policy areas leading up to the October 6 provincial election:

- Indoor Tanning
- Environmental and Occupational Carcinogens
- Access to Drugs

It is not about politics but more about the health of Ontarians. Political parties have come together in the past for health legislation and the time for all-party support for legislation is here again. For example, a growing trend of indoor tanning regulation is taking hold across Canada from coast to coast, only just catching up to many European and American standards. Both Victoria, BC, and the province of Nova Scotia have enacted legislation. Communities such as Sarnia, Ontario, are taking notice and recently asked its city council to take action.

On April 13, 2010, a bi-partisan provincial bill to protect youth from skin cancer by restricting the marketing and sale of indoor tanning services to people under the age of 19 was introduced. After its introduction, Bill 31, as it was labeled, did not make it to second reading and has since died on the legislative agenda.

“Political parties need to act on this important health issue now to protect young Ontarians,” says Joanne Di Nardo, Senior Manager, Public Issues. “We are calling on all political parties to include a commitment to restricting tanning by youth under the age of 18 and advertising by indoor tanning companies directed at youth.”

An Ipsos Reid poll conducted earlier this month and commissioned by the Society showed that:

- 83% of Ontarians support a ban on indoor tanning by youth under 18 years
- 77% said youth should be prevented from using tanning beds
- 73% of Ontarians polled said the tanning industry cannot be trusted to regulate itself and government legislation is needed

- 80% of Ontarians support legislation to regulate the tanning industry

“Every day young people across the province intentionally expose themselves to a known human carcinogen thanks to an industry that targets its services to youth,” says Joanne Di Nardo. “It’s crucial for the next government of Ontario to take action to protect the health of our youth — and we know that a majority of Ontarians agree.”

“There is no safe way to tan,” says Dr. Cheryl Rosen, Head of Dermatology, Toronto Western Hospital. “People should avoid indoor tanning and in particular for young people, it should be banned altogether.”

“It is not acceptable that the tanning industry markets its services to youth, knowing that there is a proven connection between tanning and skin cancer,” says Jeffrey Gottheil, President and Creative Director, J. Gottheil Marketing Communications Inc. and consultant to the Society. “Advertising tans for proms, for example, takes a direct aim at the population under 18 and this is something that needs to be regulated and controlled.”

Indoor tanning equipment can emit ultraviolet radiation at levels that are five times stronger than the mid-day summer sun. In 2009, the International Agency for Research on Cancer classified tanning equipment as a known carcinogen putting it in the highest cancer risk category.

Why do young people go to tanning salons and are they aware of the dangers of developing skin cancer?

Sixteen-year-old high school student Rae Ann Teixeira says she used to tan but her perspective has changed.

“All my friends were doing it and I thought it’d be nice to have tan for my semi-formal,” she says. “But it’s scary enough to get skin cancer, you don’t want to increase your risk.”

The risk is real, especially for young people. The International Agency for Research on Cancer has determined that using a tanning bed before the age of 35 can increase a person’s risk of developing skin cancer by as much as 75%. Melanoma skin cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer for youth between 15 and 29 years old and is mostly preventable.

For more information, click on [Canadian Cancer Society’s election policy recommendations](#) .

Click to view the Society's [election policy recommendations social media release](#).

The Ipsos Reid poll was conducted between June 6 and 9<sup>th</sup> with an online sample size of 822 Ontarians aged 18+. The estimated margin of error is +/- 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.



The Canadian Cancer Society is a national community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer. When you want to know more about cancer, visit our website [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca) or call our toll-free, bilingual Cancer Information Service at .

-30-

For more information, please contact:

[Christine Koserski](#)

Sr. Coordinator, Media Relations

Ontario Division

Phone: x2305

---

2011 Canadian Cancer Society.  
All rights reserved.

Ontario  
printed: 23 June 2011

*The Canadian Cancer Society only provides information that is general in nature and cannot guarantee that it is error-free or complete. The Canadian Cancer Society is not responsible for the quality of the information or services provided by another organization, nor does it endorse any service, product, treatment or therapy. A qualified healthcare professional should be consulted before making a medical decision.*