

MEDIA RELEASE

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#sunburntanlines a dangerous new trend

The latest TikTok trend encouraging Australians to tan during high levels of UV to achieve an extreme aesthetic is glamorising the dangerous culture of sun tanning.

The hashtag #sunburnttanlines highlights thousands of videos viewed by more than 200 million users promoting the UV index as a tool to reach their “perfect shade” rather than a warning of its potential health damages.

“Australia’s UV levels are like no other. While some sun exposure is important for Vitamin D production, too much can lead to more than a bad sunburn,” AMA Queensland President Dr Nick Yim said.

“As a doctor in Queensland’s sunshine state where UV levels are some of the highest, I find this trend to be extremely alarming.

“There’s never a safe way to tan.

“Just fifteen minutes in the sun can begin to damage your skin, increasing the risk of developing skin cancer – the most common cancer among young Australians.

“I am constantly hearing from colleagues across the state of the skin cancer epidemic they’re trying to manage.

“Currently two in three Australians will develop skin cancer in their lifetime. We do not want to see dangerous trends increase this statistic.

“We are seeing so many people in our older generations suffer the consequences of a lack of public knowledge about sun safety. We now know better, and it’s important we make sensible choices in our younger years to avoid adding to that statistic later in life.

“There are many simple ways to protect yourself from the sun’s harsh UV rays and the risk of skin cancer.

“Wearing sunglasses and a broad-brimmed hat can reduce UV exposure to the eyes by up to 98 per cent.

“Combined with long sleeved collared shirts, regularly applying SPF50+ sunscreen and seeking shade when possible, you will be sufficiently protected.

“Fortunately, nearly all skin cancers can be treated if found and managed early.

“We urge all Queenslanders, especially those with a history of skin cancer – personally or in their family, to regularly check your skin for new or changed spots.

“We also encourage you to visit your GP at least annually for skin checks as they will be able to conduct a detailed skin examination or refer you to a specialist if required.

“Social pressures should never prevail health, and we encourage every Australian to refresh their knowledge of the true dangers of sun exposure.”