



# Tanning? How Last Millennium

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To learn whether tanning's popularity has faded, we went right to the source: fashion and beauty magazines. After an informal focus group of eight prominent beauty editors confirmed that suntans are at last going out of style, we conducted several in-depth follow-up interviews. As Jane Larkworthy, Beauty Director of *W*, notes, "I can't remember the last time I saw a tanned model in my magazine; I can't remember the last time I saw a tanned model on the runway." Val Monroe, *O, The Oprah Magazine's* Beauty Director, has likewise observed consumers' shifting attitudes: "I do notice more people walking around pale in the summertime than there used to be." Lois Johnson, Beauty Editor at *More*, puts it more flatly: "Tanning as a life priority is over."

## LOOKING HEALTHY VS. BEING HEALTHY

Over many years, Americans were conditioned to see a tan as "healthy-looking." But the ultraviolet (UV) radiation necessary for tanning causes DNA damage that leads to problems from wrinkles to skin cancer. Larkworthy says, "My generation, at least, grew up thinking that a tan was sexy and that — ironically — it made you look more natural; you were a natural beauty if you had a tan..." These days, she feels very differently: "I am so vehemently against tanning that my reaction to someone with a tan is pretty comparable to seeing someone with a cigarette. It's just so dangerous and so silly."

The message is clear: "We all need to pay attention to *being* healthy and having healthy skin, not to changing our skin color," Johnson declares.

Sarah Brown, *Vogue's* Beauty Director, is quick to clarify just what healthy skin means: "A healthy glow does not mean a tan, and I think that is what we

have to clear up. A healthy glow means your [natural] skin tone, glowing. You, looking luminous."

Larkworthy agrees. "Skin that's not tan is gorgeous... The more you take care of it and don't subject it to the sun, the less makeup you need. Taking care of your skin is almost, in and of itself, a type of foundation. It's one step less in your makeup routine — you don't have to cover up the wrinkles as much as you would if you'd spent 20 or 30 years in the sun."

## YOU GLOW, GIRL

But while UV tan-seeking is a no-no, a little glow, the kind that comes from non-UV tanning products and bronzers, while still using sunscreen, is still permissible and won't sacrifice your health. Monroe explains, "Fortunately now there are ways for you to get that color without lying out in the sun — through bronzers, or glow products that tan you gradually. The more options there are for people, the better it is for their health."

If you must have a tan, these non-UV self-tanners are the way to go, says Monroe: "Give yourself some color, make yourself look 'healthy' — because people still generally equate having a glow or pink cheeks or sunlit skin with skiing, with being at the beach and outdoor activities. And if you can create that artificially and not make it *look* artificial, that's great."

In the end, notes Monroe, "It's kind of clichéd, but I think it's true: Real beauty comes from inside." And while "You can attempt to enhance your glow by going out and getting a sunburn," the beauty expert certainly doesn't recommend it: "That just doesn't work very well for your skin." ■



Lois Johnson  
*More Magazine*



Valerie Monroe  
*O, The Oprah Magazine*

## TANNING'S TIRED TYRANNY

Suntans promote a particularly limited vision of health and beauty, since the popular image of the tanned all-American beauty was traditionally a light-skinned Caucasian whose golden glow was the result of UV exposure rather than genetic inheritance. But recently we've embraced a more inclusive aesthetic, says Johnson. "We have such a diverse population with millions of beautiful colors of skin; I think we're enjoying our diversity."

This appreciation coincides with beauty editors' exhortations to celebrate individual, natural beauty rather than aspire to an outdated and narrow ideal. Brown explains, "In America I think for a long time there was one aesthetic ... It was very generic, in my opinion — the blonde with the wide-set blue eyes, small nose and tan. I think times are changing, and we are broadening our scope of what we find beautiful. It's about different skin tones, different facial features, all kinds of different beauty. It's about individuality."

Monroe agrees: Most readers aren't interested in looking like stereotypes. Instead, "They want to look like themselves at their very best."