



Open Your Eyes!

(Closing them isn't enough!)

By Brenda Fishbaugh

I recently visited a new tanning salon, and heard a guest say to the staff, "I don't need eyewear. I just close my eyes." Sadly, the salon employee answered, "Bed 14 is ready!" and that was that.

Here are some strategies for convincing your salon guests that closing their eyes during a tanning session is NOT enough:

Turn Toward the Light

Ask the tanner to look up toward the lights over your front counter and then close her eyes. Then, ask her to wave a hand in front of her closed eyes. Did she see her hand's shadow? Yes, she did. You can respond with, "That's how thin your eyelids are. That light is eight feet away, whereas a tanning lamp is just a few inches from your face, and it is a stronger lamp. Your eyelids block less than 25% of UV light, so eye protection is very important. Let me show you several kinds we offer."

Flash 'Em!

Turn on a flashlight and put your hand over it. We all know you can faintly see our veins and see right through the webs between our fingers. "This is just a little flashlight, and the light shines straight through your skin. We want to protect your eyes from the

bright light and UV light emitted from our tanning beds. Eye protection is the only thing that works."

If you'd like a free counter-mat for your salon, email your mailing address to Brenda@EyePro.net, and I'll send you one. Mention "IST counter-mat" in your subject line.

Towels & T-shirts

I once heard a tanner say, "I don't expose my face when I tan, I put a towel over it." Your response can be, "A towel or t-shirt is the equivalent of an SPF 5. It's not protecting your skin and it is not protecting your eyes. Regardless of how many times you fold that towel, it's not an effective block. SPF 30 is a better choice, and always wear eye protection."

Eye Protection Pamphlets

Several salon operator training programs — both online and in-class — include informative brochures you can share with your guests to explain some of the types of eye damage that occur during an unprotected tanning session, indoors or outdoors.

Gory Photos

"A picture is worth a thousand words," so show your guest a couple

of photos (not pretty) to make a point about eye damage caused by intense UV light exposure. An informative counter-

mat is available from an eye protection company that displays eye damage as well as tests for loss of night vision and color vision. Don't post these pictures in your tanning rooms — that should be a relaxing and spa-like environment; instead, I recommend that when needed, your staff show the counter-mat to guests, then explain the eye protection options you sell at your salon.

I hope these ideas help you and your team get more of your salon guests into eye protection! ■



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.