



EUROSKIN conference on reducing the health risks of sunbed use

Several delegates from ESA participated at the above conference so to allow the participants a broader and more objective view on the effects of using a sunbed. Already the definition of the conference topic has been one-sided and is not taking into account the many recent research results on positive effects of UV light. The following statement of ESA reflects our observations and views on the above conference content.

The technology of sunbed appliances is already harmonised with a European standard following recommendations from the SCCP. ESA and Photomed welcome harmonisation of the regulation of sunbed use, which, at present, differs from country to country.

It is generally accepted by the medical and scientific community that Vitamin D plays an important role in good health. It is known and generally accepted that Vitamin D levels among the European population are, at most times of the year, insufficient, most likely resulting in health risks. The natural source of Vitamin D is exposure to UV light.

Nevertheless, EUROSKIN decided during its conference in Hamburg on October 15th – 17th to solely focus on the risks of UV exposure. The lack of Vitamin D was explained as a problem of modern society and diet only. It was even suggested that it was not possible to overcome this deficiency by UV exposure. That stance is not supported by known medical science and as such, can only be viewed by ESA as disingenuous.

What was interesting were the remarks and objections by Prof. Rheinhold Vieth from Toronto University, Canada, a worldwide-acknowledged nutrition and Vitamin D expert. He criticised the above-mentioned EUROSKIN position and referred to the Canadian health authorities that recently accepted the important health effects of sunbed UV induced Vitamin D and allows health claims to this effect by sunbed operators.

Furthermore, it was encouraging that different scientists reported stabilisation or even a decrease in the skin cancer incidence in some countries, especially in the younger population. It should be noted that, this is, in spite of further sunbed use.

By Gary Lipman, Chairman ESA Media Committee