

Are Gel Manicure Lamps Bad for Your Skin?

They emit UVA radiation, after all.

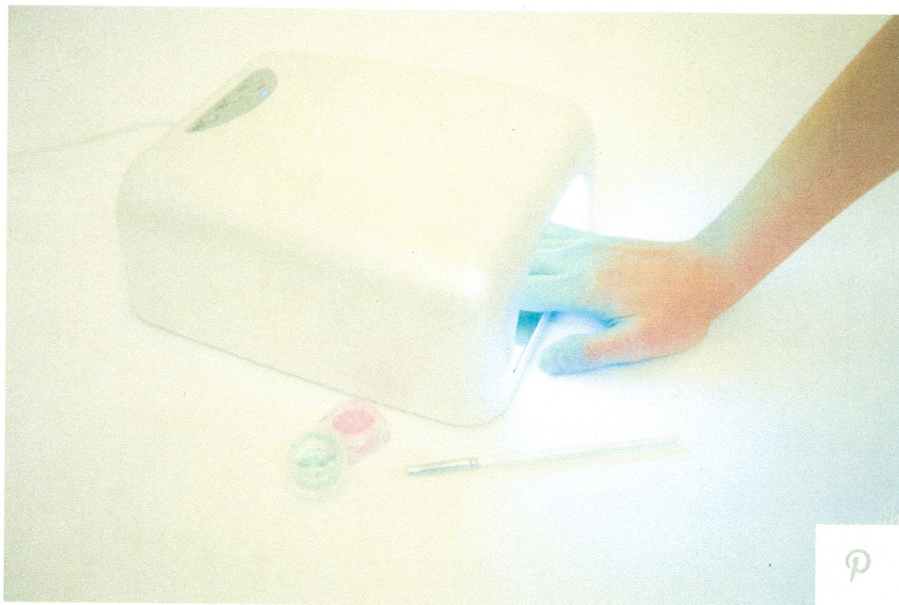
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One of the main reasons we get our nails done is to keep our hands looking young and healthy. But what if manicures are actually part of the problem, making our hands look older and even putting us at risk for skin cancer?

Late last year, the **FDA proposed** restricting the use of tanning beds to people over age 18 in an attempt to reduce cases of deadly skin cancers in teens.

Unfortunately people who **regularly go tanning** still aren't aware that they're putting themselves at risk.

Could gel manicures be next? The nail lamps used to set gel manicures — whether LED or UV — both emit UVA radiation, which has been linked to premature skin aging and skin cancer, according to the **Skin Cancer Foundation**.

But in a 2014 study in [JAMA Dermatology](#), researchers measured UVA radiation levels from 17 different types of nail drying lamps and found that the likelihood of skin damage was, on the whole, minimal. The Skin Cancer Foundation also considers the risks to be moderate, and adds that the risk is much lower than tanning beds.

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If you're still concerned about skin cancer or premature aging on your hands, fret not: There are ways to protect your hands from the UVA radiation, [NPR reports](#). Skipping the nail lamps altogether is one obvious option, but if you don't want to give up your perfect gel manicure just yet, apply sunscreen to your hands and/or wear photoprotective gloves with open fingertips (like [YouVeeShield](#)) to keep your skin and nails looking healthy and beautiful.