

My insecurities about being pale turned into a tanning addiction

Growing up in upstate New York the lead skies and cool temperatures left me searching for a way to be tan.

My fair skin was something I resented and was always trying to change. Sunless tanners left me streaky and orange, not to mention discourage and humiliated after everyone picked up on my artificial tan.

My insecurities with being pale turned into a tanning addiction that started in my junior year of high school. I wanted to look good for prom so I visited tanning beds in search of a solution. After graduating, tanning turned into a daily routine for me. The warmth felt so good and reminded me of the beach but most importantly, *I finally had a tan!*

This obsession lasted until I was 26 years old and found myself in the dermatologist's office for acne; I started browsing through a melanoma brochure. When I went into the examining room, I showed *a spot* to the Doctor, he quickly said "we are going to have to remove this immediately". Shook up and unaware of what melanoma was, I left feeling worried about the outcome. Days had passed, and then I received a call from their office stating I had stage-three melanoma. Life has completely changed for me since then, a hard lesson learned.

Now, at twenty-nine years old, I am the Director at Spa Cara, where I can safely perform organic custom airbrush tanning. I'm an advocate when it comes to avoiding permanent and deadly damage to your skin for a temporary tan. Our Natural Glow Sunless Tan lasts seven to fourteen days, giving your skin a healthy glow.

Heather Champion