

VIRAL 'PERINEUM SUNNING' TREND HAS PEOPLE EXPOSING THEIR BUTTS TO THE SUN

Here's why you should absolutely not try it for yourself.

BY ANTHONY O'REILLY



By now, you've probably heard of perineum sunning, the viral wellness practice sometimes known as "butthole tanning" that's somehow gaining some traction on Instagram. For those fortunate enough to have no idea what we're talking about, perineum sunning is when you expose your perineum—the area between your anus and sexual organ—to direct sunlight. Seriously.

Some Instagram influencers (more on them later) claim that exposing your nether regions to the light of day has countless benefits for the body, including improved overall health and hormone function. The trend snuck into the mainstream over the past few weeks, with more people trying it out for themselves to see if there's any truth to the claims.

Unfortunately for some, including *Avengers: Endgame* star Josh Brolin, exposing that body part to the sun can have some dire consequences.

"My pucker hole is crazy burned and I was going to spend the day shopping with my family and instead I'm icing and using aloe and burn creams because of the severity of the pain," Brolin wrote in an Instagram post that's amassed nearly 190,000 likes.

Brolin's not the only star who's tried it out. Biohacking expert and Bulletproof founder Dave Asprey is also on the bandwagon, but he seems to be enjoying his experience.

We tapped **Dr. Gary Goldenberg**, a dermatologist who recently appeared on the *Muscle & Fitness* podcast *Reps*, and he didn't mince words when asked his opinion on the practice. "It's the stupidest thing I've heard in a long time," he said. "There's a reason why they say the sun don't shine there." He was even more succinct when asked if anyone should even attempt it: "Absolutely not!"

That said, if your curiosity is killing you, keep reading to find out more about the practice and how it came about.



How It Began

Perineum sunning apparently has roots in Taoism, a Chinese philosophy. In Taoism, the perineum is called the "Gate of Life and Death," and is considered a gateway where energy enters and exits the body.

Dr. Stephen T. Chang, who has written about Taoist physical and spiritual practices, shed some light on the bizarre practice in the 1986 book *The Tao of Sexology: The Book of Infinite Wisdom*. In it, he writes that sunlight "has excellent germicidal qualities, and exposure to the sun will help keep the anal and vaginal areas healthy and free of germs."

As to how it became an Internet sensation, two Instagram influencers appear to be the culprits.

Ra Teasdale, a self-proclaimed teacher of "human technology," has preached the practice for some time. In October, he posted a video of three men trying the technique captioned "The original butthole sunning video."

In her posts, she stresses the fact that you're not trying to tan your butthole, just absorb some of the sun's energy. According to Meagan, perineum sunning is so energizing that she no longer needs coffee to start her day. Amazingly, people on both users' posts have since commented that they're willing to try it out.



The Supposed Benefits

Proponents of the practice believe that a mere 30 seconds of sunlight on the perineum “supercharges” your organs, regulates hormone functions, improves cognitive function, and has similar benefits to being in the sun all day with your clothes on.

It should be noted that there are no scientific studies to back up these claims (yet). To put it lightly, Goldenberg is skeptical of the influencers’ claims. “UV doesn’t penetrate deep enough to affect the organs,” he says. “All the claimed health benefits, I just don’t see how it’s possible any of them are true.”



The Dangers

Not that you need to be told this, but the perineum is one of the most sensitive parts of the body because it doesn't typically see the light of day. So although the influencers say you only need 30 seconds of sun to feel the benefits,

Goldenberg warns that's more than enough time to do damage to the area and put you at risk of sunburn or dermatitis (inflammation of the skin).

"It's just not used to being exposed to the sun," he says. "If it gets irritated, you're in danger of getting rashes and fungal infections. It's a very, very sensitive area."

Any form of irritation to the perineum, he warns, would make it nearly impossible to do just about anything without pain. If you've already made the mistake of flashing the sun and are now in the hot seat, so to speak, Goldenberg recommends icing the area to help with skin irritation and promptly visiting a dermatologist.



Listen to the Professionals

Instagram influencers have suggested a lot of crazy things over the years, and some have actually wound up being somewhat worthwhile (the keto diet, for example). But perineum sunning is one thing you should just stay far away from.

"You have to take medical advice from medical professionals," Goldenberg says. "I think in general terms, people have to use their judgment and think of what's being offered to them on social media."

To hear more of Goldenberg's skincare tips, watch his appearance on Reps here:



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