

U.S. Scanners Present Skin Cancer Risk: MDs

Technology not permitted in Canada

By [Global Research](#)

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Postmedia News; Agence France-Presse — U.S. scientists warned Friday that the full-body, graphic-image X-ray scanners that are being used to screen passengers at airports around that country may be unsafe, raising concerns for Canadians travelling south of the border.

“They say the risk is minimal, but statistically someone is going to get skin cancer from these X-rays,” said Dr. Michael Love, who runs an X-ray lab at the department of biophysics and biophysical chemistry at Johns Hopkins University School of medicine.

“No exposure to X-ray is considered beneficial.

“We know X-rays are hazardous, but we have a situation at the airports where people are so eager to fly that they will risk their lives in this manner,” he said.

The possible health dangers posed by the U.S. scanners add to passengers and airline crews’ concerns about the devices, which have been dubbed “naked” scanners because of the graphic image they give of a person’s body, genitalia and all.

Despite the concerns the warning raises for Canadians travelling through U.S. airports, authorities in this country say scanners used at airports here rely on different technology that doesn’t pose a health risk to travellers.

According to the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, full-body X-ray scanner technology used in the U.S. is not permitted in Canada.

While 36 full-body scanners are in use at 16 Canadian airports, spokesman Mathieu Larocque said they use “millimetre wave technology” which projects low-level radio frequency energy “over and around the passengers’ bodies.

“The RF wave is reflected back from the body and from objects concealed on the body, producing a three-dimensional image,” he said.

According to Health Canada, this technology poses no risk to humans.

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