

ARE PERMANENT COSMETICS FOR YOU?

Thanks to the art of tattooing, many women in all stages of life and even some men are having their eyebrows, eyeliner, and lips colored permanently, and loving it!

The earliest evidence of tattooing dates back to the ice age. While some cosmetic tattooing was done thousands of years ago, it really came into its own as an industry in the late 1970's. At that time, various tattoo artists around the country began offering permanent makeup / cosmetic tattooing and reconstructive pigmentation. In the 1980's aestheticians, electrologists, nurses, and cosmetologists became interested in performing these procedures. Training programs were established throughout the country and the industry has grown rapidly since then.

Tattooing, whether it be for decorating the body or applying permanent cosmetics, should be considered thoughtfully before going ahead with the permanent color work.

What type of person seeks this procedure? What are the benefits? Anyone desiring to save time applying makeup, allergies to traditional cosmetics, active in sports, and manually, physically, or visually impaired can benefit from permanent cosmetics. For the woman that has little or no eyebrows, permanent cosmetics frees them from constantly drawing them on. Permanent cosmetics do not sweat, cry or wear off. Properly applied, the colors should appear natural and subtle. The most common applications are for the eyebrows, eyeliner, lip liner and full lips. Although this is not considered a medical procedure, many physicians employ technicians to aid their patients with skin camouflage such as: areola coloration after mastectomies, scarring, and other corrections.

Deciding to have permanent cosmetics applied may be easy. Finding a technician may not be as easy. Because there is presently no group or agency that oversees this industry, it is up to the consumer to be the detective. Most potential clients assume that the training and application techniques are standard, but that is not the case. There are no certifications or licensing required. If a person has a machine, pigment, and a chair, they can go into business.

What does the consumer look for? What questions do they ask? How does one decide? First, ask where and how long they trained. A few hours or a few days is not enough time to achieve proper training. Most good technicians have received weeks, if not months of training and participate in continuing education.

Ask how long they have been doing permanent cosmetics. Do they belong to any organizations such as, the Society of Permanent Cosmetic Professionals (SPCP) or other special groups.

Ask if they will furnish pictures and references. Do they keep detailed records? Ask to see where the procedures are performed. Does the area look clean and comfortable?

Find out if the technician uses sterile needles and equipment for each client. There are some machines on the market that cannot be heat sterilized or are not fully disposable. Do not go to anyone that does not use an autoclave for sterilization and walk away if the needles are not taken from a sterile package.

Ask price. What can you expect for that price? Ask about their guarantee and touch-up policy. Permanent cosmetic prices are set by each technician and can vary greatly from \$200 to \$1,200 for the same procedure; however, price should not be your main concern. Do not select a technician based on price alone. Make sure the technician is competent.

For the most part, permanent cosmetics are just that... permanent. Over the years some individuals experience more fading than others, but this is nothing that a proper touch-up can't cure. There is a place in today's busy lifestyle for permanent cosmetics, so if you decide this type of procedure is what you want, have it done. Ask questions, get references, and look at pictures. Permanent cosmetics is here to stay, so take advantage of the many benefits and enjoy the freedom of looking your best all day, every day!