

New ink makes tattoos less permanent

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Scientists at two U.S. universities developed a solution to make tattoos less permanent -- an ink that can be removed with a single laser treatment.

Tattoo removal traditionally is painful, expensive and time-consuming, often involving several laser treatments that aren't always effective and can scar, the New York Post said Friday. An average removal session costs as much as \$400.

The new development by scientists at Harvard Medical School and Duke University is to hit the market within a few months. Tattoo artists told the Post they would welcome the new ink as long as it is safe.

Some, though, said they wonder whether the ink, developed by using beads called polymer microspheres, would hold up as well as traditional inks that include heavy metals to help forestall fading.

"It might open the door for some people who are worried about the permanence but, at the same time, the permanence is kind of the point of tattooing," Mehai Bakaty, co-owner of Fineline Tattoo in New York, told the newspaper.

One-in-four U.S. adults has at least one tattoo, the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology said.

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