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# medical spa

REPORT

Permanent cosmetics are growing in popularity as another way to enhance clients' beauty. For more, turn to page 74.

70 **IN THE KNOW**  
News & Trends

72 **PRODUCT WATCH**  
What's New

74 **PROPER PROCEDURES**  
Permanent Makeup

# Long-Term Benefits

Learn how offering permanent makeup at your medical spa can leave a positive lasting impression on your clients.

FOR SOME WOMEN, APPLYING MAKEUP IS a highlight of their day. It's a chance to conceal imperfections and change their look with products and a few simple strokes of a brush. For others, however, it's a dreaded event, and for some, it can be a difficult or even impossible task. For these clients, there is a solution: permanent makeup. Also known as permanent cosmetics, permanent makeup is a form of cosmetic tattooing that involves a technique that deposits colored pigment into the skin. Permanent cosmetic procedures include eyeliner, eyebrows, lip liner, and lash enhancement. Medical treatments like scar camouflage and areola restoration also qualify as permanent makeup.

While some clients opt for permanent makeup to achieve a softer and more natural enhancement to their appearance, it is also popular among clients who have allergies or skin sensitivities to traditional cosmetics. Fitness enthusiasts and active clients appreciate that they can always look good without worrying about smearing makeup when sweating and having to reapply after working out. It can even be an option for those who have a hard time applying makeup due to a condition like a stroke or arthritis. "Permanent cosmetics is a growing service that spa owners around the globe are offering clients as another way to enhance their beauty," says Robert Waters, vice president and general manager of Nouveau Contour.

Unlike tattooing, the depth of the needle, type of device, and the techniques used in permanent makeup are designed for the face instead of the body, according to Michelle Park, master liner, head trainer, and president of Long-Time-Liner USA. She adds that permanent makeup also differs from traditional tattoos, because tattooing is pigmented into the hypodermis, the third layer of the skin, which gives tattoos their permanence on



the skin. With permanent makeup, the dermal, or second, layer of the skin is usually pigmented, and therefore offers a degree of permanence. Because the epidermis does shed over time, the result can last anywhere from five years to a lifetime, depending on the client's lifestyle, color used, and topical products applied on the skin post-procedure.

Permanent makeup can be applied using various devices, including manual tools such as bamboo stick needles, pens, and razor-type tools, or electronically powered devices like a standard tattooing rotary device or other piston-style device. Many of today's permanent makeup devices are digital for the technician's ease, as hand-powered tools can be difficult to gauge the correct depth of pigmentation, according to Park. While permanent cosmetic devices can range in price from \$1,200 to \$4,000, the quality of the device, along with the skill of the technician and colors used, help determine the service price. Park suggests that for new clients with no previous permanent makeup, technicians should aim for the following price ranges depending on their level of proficiency, not just experience: \$300 to \$400 for beginning technicians, \$500 to \$700 for intermediate technicians, and \$800-plus for expert technicians.

In order to offer permanent makeup as a service, a medical spa must have a highly trained and certified permanent cosmetic technician to perform the services and topnotch equipment to ensure the procedures are successful. According

Permanent cosmetics is especially popular for enhancing the eyebrows.

**"Permanent cosmetics is a growing service that spa owners around the globe are offering clients as another way to enhance their beauty."**

*continued on page 76*

*continued from page 74*

to permanent makeup expert Dominique Bossavy, medical spa owners need to comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines and have a technician who has all the training and talent to produce safe and effective results. Also, in the U.S., each state has different rules regarding tattooing, so it is imperative that medical spa owners check all legislation before bringing the service into their spa and make sure they have the proper insurance. “It’s important to know that in America, anyone can obtain certification in as little as one to three days of training, and membership to peer groups is obtained without screening,” says Bossavy. “Spa owners need to be selective about the quality of the technician, as ultimately, the spa’s reputation will be on the line if the technician delivers poor results.”

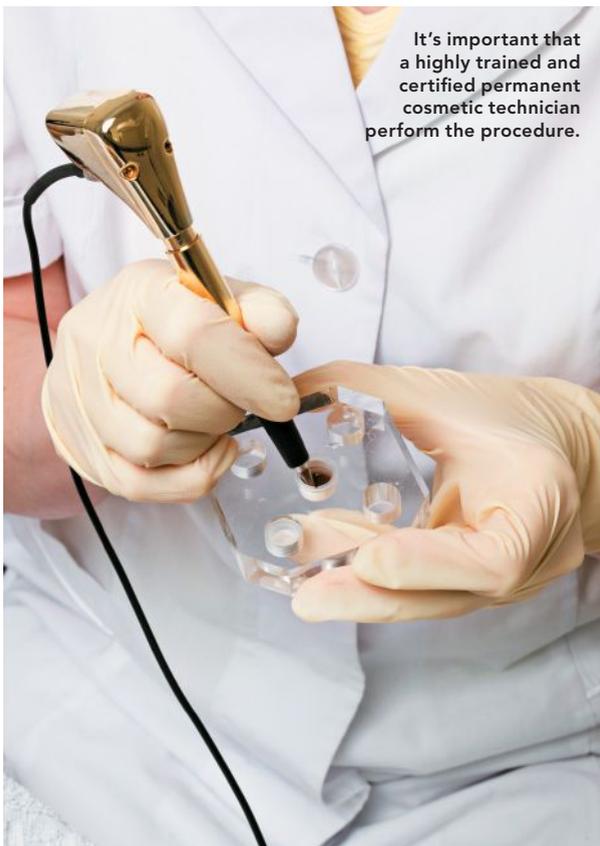
While permanent makeup procedures are generally safe for most clients, there are some risks involved, as with any tattooing service, because the procedure involves a needle, and the service draws blood. According to Park, unsanitary conditions, such as lack of surgical gloves, an ill-prepped area,

and improperly sterilized equipment, can cause infections. Technicians must also be careful to prevent the spread of bloodborne diseases such as HIV and hepatitis. Poorly manufactured inorganic pigments, which are derived from minerals, may be prone to change color in the skin, and some poorer quality pigments can lead to basal cell carcinoma if they are made of azo dyes—usually found in synthetic organic pigment. However, Park believes one of the biggest issues concerning permanent makeup involves its removal. “Clients may become dissatisfied with the outcome of permanent makeup over time, and it is usually very difficult and costly to remove the color once embedded in the skin,” she says. For example, when removing permanent eyebrows, laser tattoo removal services may affect the eyebrow hair during the process, and as the skin texture changes over time due to aging and environmental factors, permanent makeup can change or appear unbalanced. Despite its risks, though, permanent makeup can be a beneficial option for many clients.

Another option for clients not ready to commit to a long-term look is semi-permanent makeup, which is becoming a popular trend, according to Park. It offers clients the same benefits of permanent makeup without making a lifetime commitment to one look. Instead of pigmenting in the dermal region, the color is applied to the epidermis, the uppermost layer of the skin. The procedure does not involve drawing blood, and it is generally less painful, as it does not directly touch the nerves. “Because the color will fade in roughly one to two years, depending on skin type, clients are able to update and change their style annually or leave it to fade away completely if they do not wish to continue,” says Park.

Another trend in permanent makeup, according to Waters, involves creating a 3-D effect to the popular lip liner and eyebrow procedures, but Bossavy advises using caution whenever considering a trendy permanent makeup service, as it can leave an unfavorable long-term result. “I remember many years ago when

*continued on page 78*



It’s important that a highly trained and certified permanent cosmetic technician perform the procedure.

## Help Wanted

To find the most qualified artist, Jeanee Lusby, founder of NaturaLook Institute of Permanent Cosmetics in La Jolla, CA, suggests consulting more than one potential artist. Then, narrow down the field with a thorough interview.

- Ask how many permanent makeup procedures they do each day, week, and month.

- Ask to see a current bloodborne pathogen certificate and any advanced education and membership certificates.

- Inquire about what pigments and devices they use and about their technique, questioning their color theory and undertone training so as to better understand how they choose the proper shades for each client.

- Find out if they have liability insurance.

- Request to view their work with before-and-after photos.

*continued from page 76*

freckles and white eyeliner were a permanent makeup trend,” says Bossavy. “The trend passed, the white liner remained, and the freckles turned all kinds of colors. It looked unnatural and was very difficult to remove. Another example is what was supposed to be a soft pink blush turned into a huge brown hyperpigmentation stain that grew and damaged pores. In my opinion, the words ‘permanent’ and ‘trend’ just don’t mix well.”

When it comes to attracting clients to permanent makeup services, Waters believes that the best marketing tool is to simply notify current clients that it is available. “You will be surprised by how many clients want the service or have a friend who is looking for this service,” he says. “Remember, the best advertising is the client who has gotten great work from a properly trained technician using the best equipment.” Also, because touch-ups are necessary at some point to keep the color visible, spas can encourage clients to come back for the touch-up service by offering it at a discounted price. Park also recommends offering a senior discount and deals on holidays, like Mother’s Day, but she cautions against offering a Groupon or other mass deal discount, as it may not be profitable enough to justify the technician’s time.

All new clients should meet with the permanent makeup artist prior to the service for a consultation, just as they would for any cosmetic surgery procedure. During the consultation, the

technician should be sure to find out why the client wants the procedure and what he or she hopes to achieve. Also, it offers the perfect chance for technicians to explain how the procedure works, as well as share information on homecare treatment and what can be expected in the days and weeks following the procedure. “The area after pigmentation will be darker for a few days to a week, depending on the intensity of the service, as the dead skin gradually builds up on top in a light scabbing,” says Park. “This skin will shed off, and it will be lighter when all the old dead skin falls off. To provide the best results, clients should keep the area moisturized to retain the most color.”

With the proper devices and highly skilled technicians, permanent makeup can be a profitable service for any spa. It offers an array of benefits that range from shortening the time spent applying cosmetics each day to helping clients with cosmetic and medical conditions feel comfortable and beautiful in their skin. “Permanent makeup provides relief from applying makeup throughout the day, saving time and money in the long run,” says Park. “Additionally, permanent makeup can recreate the look of eyebrows for clients with hair loss from cancer, alopecia, and over-plucking. And unbalanced eyebrows, cleft lips or palates, and other deformities may be visually corrected by permanent makeup—helping clients improve their self-confidence in their appearance.”—*Nicole Altavilla*

“You will be surprised by how many clients want the service or have a friend who is looking for this service.”

## Leave a Mark

Permanent makeup is a long-term investment for you and your clients, so make it worthwhile by looking into these devices that help deliver superior results.

### **Bellaire Industry Digital Pro:**

Featuring a handpiece and an LED speed adjustment option, this ergonomically designed tool is noise-free and provides a one-time needle cartridge use for quick needle changes. [www.bellaireindustry.com](http://www.bellaireindustry.com)

### **Bella Permanent Makeup**

**Tattoo Machine:** This unit is equipped with a handpiece and a safety shell system, which reduces the risk of cross

contamination and infection during procedures. [www.tattoo-machine-bella.com](http://www.tattoo-machine-bella.com)

### **Derma Contour Permanent**

**Make Up Device:** Complete with a foot pedal and easy-to-use LCD screen, this digital device features an acid-proof and stainless steel surface with needle power capability and a pulse-free switch. [www.dermacontour.co.uk](http://www.dermacontour.co.uk)

### **Long-Time-Liner USA**

**Conture Liner—Duo:** This semi-permanent makeup device features a readable display and offers four preset programs to control speed and ink flow for an easier application process. [www.longtimeliner.com](http://www.longtimeliner.com)

### **Nouveau Contour**

**Intelligent High Definition:** Featuring 18 different needle formations, this computerized

device features an LCD screen that indicates what type of pigmentation has been selected with the matching speed. [www.nouveacontour.com](http://www.nouveacontour.com)

### **Purebeau Magic Liner:**

This tool contains an aluminum casing and easy-to-read display panel to ensure precise results. [www.purebeau-pro.com](http://www.purebeau-pro.com)  
—*Jessica Morrobel*