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Should Micropigmentation Professionals Drop the 'Permanent' out of Permanent Makeup?



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(PRWEB) - (PRWEB) February 27, 2006 -- Quick! What do you think of when someone says "permanent"? Do you think something is final, completed, over with, finished, not capable of being reversed and continuing unchanged?

Webster's Dictionary defines permanent as 1) "Lasting or remaining without essential change"; and 2) "Not expected to change in status, condition, or place".

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For this reason the terms "permanent makeup" and "permanent cosmetics" have come under scrutiny in the light of day, literally. There are many things that adversely affect color tattooed into the skin which include pigment lightfastness and particle size, the amount of sunlight exposure, anti-aging preparations applied to the face, the body's immune system and metabolism. Linda H Dixon, MD, in an upcoming article in Micronews®, the official newsletter of the American Academy of Micropigmentation, is going to discuss what is known about the fate of color tattooed into the skin. "What is sure," she says, "is that no matter what you call it, cosmetic tattooing is here to stay. Women, and some men, both want and need the natural enhancement micropigmentation offers, even if it is only semi-permanent". The new Academy Poster entitled "FREEDOM. LOOK GREAT. LASTING MAKEUP" is available for Academy professionals to display on their wall. Members want their clients to know the colors used for eyebrows, lips and areolas are not "permanent" by Webster's dictionary standards.

In Australia and Asia, the term "Semi-Permanent" makeup has been adopted to reflect the long lasting nature of micropigmentation. In Australia, professionals are not allowed to advertise "permanent makeup" as it is considered false advertising.

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Paul C. Howard, PhD, of the national Center for Toxicological Research, U.S. Food & Drug Administration, [Department of Health and Human Services](#) writes "...this is not surprising that different countries would have different legal-terms for describing this practice. Neither the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act nor the FDA by regulation, has established a definition for these terms."

In the Journal of Toxicology and Applied Pharmacology, Volume 209, Issue 2 ,1 December 2005, Pages 145-158, researchers describe tattooing hairless mice. Dr. Howard states pigment was found in lymph nodes as early as 6 hours but more pronounced amounts of pigment were present at 24 hours.

Dr. Howard continues, "The objective of the Tox. Appl. Pharm. Study was to determine if "tattooing" could be accomplished with dorsal skin of hairless mice, and if the pigments were deposited in a manner consistent with humans (in the dermis; some degree of longevity within the dermis)." His Arkansas based research laboratory is involved in investigations involving the breakdown and metabolism of tattoo pigments to evaluate any potential toxicity.

Charles Davis, a California attorney, states "If you say 'permanent' I would think it would last a long, long, long time. Permanent is not appropriate. In fact it may be misleading." Mr. Davis continues, "If the State of the Art indicated that it indeed was permanent that would be different. His advice? Use "semi-permanent or long-lasting" and explain to clients that micropigmentation does different things in different people. It can depend on the application (too) if applied differently.

Experienced professionals agree the colors used for cosmetic tattooing fade with time despite claims to the contrary. This was confirmed by a survey completed at the 2005 AAM Convention in Las Vegas where 66 of 78 professionals said that eyebrows need to be touched-up every 1-3 years. "Not even the phrase 'Lifetime Guarantee', which is understood to be seven years, applies to 'permanent makeup'", says Charles Zwerling, MD, Chairman of the Board of the American Academy of Micropigmentation. Unlike "permanent color" applied to hair which is dead and either falls out or grows out, cosmetic tattooing is applied to living tissue. The color is susceptible to change once placed in the skin and scientists are discovering more about these changes.

Juliet Verdi of Maryland says micropigmentation is very good for her orthodox Jewish clients because it is not very obvious and only lasts 3-5 years depending on their skin. "If you don't have to put on makeup for 3 years, that beats Botox® that only lasts six months", she states humorously. "Tattoos are sacreligious to Jewish sects and this (micropigmentation) is semi-permanent and does fade. If it's all gone then that's fine too. This gives women a choice. If you say permanent and it's not permanent, then people get ... off" she notes.

In 1985, Dr. Zwerling and Dr. Christensen, both ophthalmologists, first used the word "Micropigmentation" to illustrate the technique of placing pigment in skin. Micropigmentation is a term to include color placement into the dermis of the skin for enhancement but not any procedures intended to damage the skin as in some definitions of "tattoo" which include damaging the skin such as intentional scars. Micropigmentation also differs from traditional tattooing in that it is not intended for

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adornment, religious, gang or tribal identity. Even though Micropigmentation involves placing or replacing color into the skin, the two disciplines are different. In essence the primary differences between tattooing and micropigmentation are the purpose and location of use. Micropigmentation does not imply duration of the color so clients are less likely to think their procedure will last forever.

Dr. Zwerling states, in the second textbook he authored he defined Micropigmentation as 'the implantation of inert pigment granules in a clean, sterile atmosphere by a trained practitioner for the purpose of a natural appearing cosmetic enhancement.' The policy statement by the AAM in 2001 included the definition of micropigmentation as "The procedure in which minute, metabolically inert pigment granules are placed mechanically or manually below the epidermis for the purpose of cosmetic and/or corrective enhancement." The American Academy of Micropigmentation® was registered with the Patent and Trademark office in 1995. Now, twenty-one years later, the word micropigmentation has gained popularity around the word.

Tattoo inks of carbon black used by traditional tattoo artists last in the skin although they do discolor and fade over the years as well. The micropigmentation profession largely avoids "inks" as they unpredictably cause streaking or migration when used around the delicate tissues of the eyelids.

The Academy recognizes that "permanent makeup" and "permanent cosmetics" are terms widely used in America. However, in light of scientific evidence and clinical observation, they advise members to fully disclose the need for additional color enhancements (boosts) to their clients and to avoid the solitary or unqualified use of the word "permanent" and to include this in the informed consent that the client signs. After publishing two textbooks on the subject and forming two non-profit organizations as early as 1985 Dr. Zwerling agrees it is time to submit the term "micropigmentation" to Webster's Dictionary.

"Micropigmentation is an effective tool for anti-aging", says Dr. Dixon. "No matter what you call it, you can look better and save a lot of valuable time".

For more information on Micropigmentation, visit the American Academy of Micropigmentation website at www.micropigmentation.org

For career inquiries or to join the Academy call 800/441-2515.

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