

## Permanent Makeup FAQs

**Q: What is Permanent Makeup?**

A: Permanent Makeup is a cosmetic procedure where extremely tiny amounts of natural pigments are inserted into the dermal layer of the skin. This is an increasingly popular cosmetic option for females.

**Q: Why would a young female sailor want Permanent Makeup?**

A: Permanent makeup may be desired by females who don't want to spend a lot of time applying makeup every day. This procedure is especially attractive to females who have light, sparse or half eyebrows or sparse eye lashes or no eye lashes, are physically active, or who have oily skin that sheds makeup easily. Females that possess poorly defined or descending lips may also desire this procedure.

**Q: May female sailors pick their own colors?**

A: Yes, but the colors must fall within the acceptable guidelines. Females shall use makeup colors and shades that compliment their natural skin tone. Eyebrows shall be black, brown or natural red that matches natural hair color. Eyeliner shall be black, brown, light blue and light green and not to extend past the natural corner of the eye. Lip liner and lipstick shall be the color of your natural lip or shades of pink and moderate reds only.

**Q: What if a female sailor wants to change the color after the procedure?**

A: Permanent makeup works to enhance your natural features. Regular makeup can be applied over top or permanent makeup can be touched-up.

**Q: Does the pigment pose allergy problems?**

A: Yes, it's always possible for someone to have an allergic reaction, and female sailors should be advised to ensure their technician is using hypoallergenic pigment. In the research conducted, there have been very few reactions to the pigments being used in civilian clinics. Some doctors recommend that females with known allergies have permanent cosmetic procedures done so they avoid cosmetic products that they are sensitive to. Knowing the medical history of females is vitally important as they could be highly allergic to many substances. A patch test can be done prior to the permanent makeup procedure to mitigate reactions.

**Q: Is the procedure painful?**

A: Yes, but it will depend on the females threshold or tolerance for pain. Topical anesthetic ointments are normally used during procedures. Everyone experiences pain differently. Some discomfort, from very mild to moderate, comparable to tweezing could be experienced. Females must understand that experiencing some pain is possible and likely, especially during the healing process when anesthetic wears off.

**Q: How long does the procedure take?**

A: Times varies with each individual, but the average time allotted for eyebrows, eyeliner and lip liner is one hour. Full lipstick may take up to three hours.

**Q: What's the recovery time?**

A: Sailors can return to full duty within 1-2 days for eyebrows, eyeliner and lip liner. Full lipstick takes a day longer for swelling to decrease. Immediately following the procedure, colors will look 20-30% stronger than the final result. It takes approximately 4 to 6 days for the skin to completely heal. Sailors should procure such treatments during a time where any potential complication would not interfere with mission accomplishment (e.g. be available for shore-based medical care for a minimum of two weeks after the procedure).

**Q: Is the procedure safe?**

A: If proper sterilization and sanitary guidelines are met, permanent makeup procedures should be completely safe.

**Q: How can I confirm that a technician's license is valid and current?**

A: You can call the individual state medical boards or consult their individual state medical websites to verify that a permanent makeup technician is licensed.

**Q: What are some of the associated risk factors?**

A: Some known risk factors which would increase the likelihood of complications or undesired affects from permanent makeup application include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Individuals prone to skin infections
- Individuals who are prone to conjunctivitis (if done on eyelid margin)
- Those with known sensitivities to any compounds in inking agent
- Individuals who keloid or are prone to hypertrophic scarring
- People with recurrent herpes virus infections in areas to be tattooed
- People who tan frequently or those that do not take sun safety precautions (UV rays can sometimes discolor/change pigment tones after placement)
- A person undergoing major life stress (death of family member, divorce, etc.) to ensure placement is a well thought-out decision
- Use of alcohol, aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (motrin) or anticoagulant medications
- Inability to refrain from contact lens use for a week after the procedure
- Inability to refrain from submerged activities for a week after the procedure

If an individual has questions regarding the suitability of permanent makeup procedures, she should seek the advice of her Primary Care Physician who can more specifically question the patient about goals, expectations, and their reasons to pursue a permanent procedure, especially with consideration to the above risk factors.

**Q: What if I want the permanent makeup removed?**

A: There are no current or expected facilities within the DOD that are performing surgical procedures or laser treatments to remove permanent makeup. Due to the light colors of the pigment, often times there can be paradoxical darkening of the skin after laser. The procedure is considered permanent. If the service member insists on having the permanent makeup removed, it can be procured by civilian experts at a personal cost.