

PIMA DERMATOLOGY

ADULT / PEDIATRIC / COSMETIC / LASER & SKIN SURGERY

OPTIONS FOR TATTOO REMOVAL

The ability to remove a tattoo will vary by the amount, color, age, and depth of tattoo pigment applied to the skin. In general, the older the tattoo, the faster it responds to treatment. Certain colors and complex pigments (i.e., greens, purples, and yellows) may be more difficult to remove. Different techniques may be necessary to remove various colors from the skin.

What treatments are available to remove a tattoo?

1. Laser Techniques

- **Astanza Trinity Laser:** Houses three different high-powered *Q-Switched Laser* modalities: *Ruby*, *YAG 532* and *YAG 1064*. Ink located deep within the skin can be more aggressively treated with higher fluences (power) and larger spot size to reach the ink.
- **Carbon Dioxide CO₂ Laser and Erbium:YAG Laser:** These lasers are used to create an abrasion of the skin to remove pigment more efficiently in difficult to treat tattoos, however, scarring is more likely. Removal may require 1 to 5 treatments.
- **Q-Switched Nd-YAG Laser:** Utilizes a high intensity infrared or green light pulse in a rapid manner. It works by exploding pigment particles beneath the skin into smaller and smaller particles with each treatment. Removal may require as many as 4 to 8 laser treatment sessions at approximately 4 to 6 week intervals for optimal or complete removal. This laser is excellent for tattoos that are dark blue, black, or red in color, but does poorly with removal of green and yellow pigment. Minimal to no scarring.
- **Q-Switched Ruby Laser:** This laser works on a similar principal as the Q-Switched Laser Nd-YAG laser. The Ruby laser is ideal for dark pigments and works well to remove green pigment.
- **Alexandrite Laser:** Similar in principle to the other Q-Switched Lasers, this Laser has a broad application for the removal of most tattoo pigments and is excellent to remove tattoos with dark black, blue, or green colors.

2. Surgical Excision

- If the tattoo is relatively small and/or easily accessible and cosmetically in an inconspicuous area, the entire tattoo can be surgically cut out or excised, and sutured closed with stitches. This can be done in a single treatment session, or in several treatment sessions. If surgical excision techniques are performed, a line scar will be created and can spread, leaving a significant or disfiguring scar in certain areas of the body.

Please see next page.

Which laser treatment is best to remove my tattoo?

- The best laser for removal depends on the size and location of the tattoo, the type and color of the tattoo pigments, and your willingness to accept incomplete removal, scarring, or multiple treatment sessions. Certain dark colored tattoos and some deeply applied tattoos will take multiple sessions with lasers and may be costly. However, this almost complete and virtually scarless removal often makes laser treatment one of the best options.

What can be done to minimize discomfort during treatment?

- The surgical excision and dermabrasion techniques are all performed with local anesthesia, which consists of a small injection of Lidocaine at the tattoo treatment site. The Q-Switched lasers involve a rapid fire pinpoint pricking sensation likened to the feeling of hot grease from a frying pan touching the skin. Most people find it quite tolerable, similar to the pain felt in applying the tattoo. Topical or local anesthesia or sedation by pill is available on request, prior to treatment.

What are the risks and side effects of treatments?

- Risks of treatment involve the incomplete removal of pigment, the potential for a change in pigmentation (especially skin lightening or darkening), infection, or scarring. We will take every precaution to minimize any potential side effects.

Can cosmetic tattooing around the lips or eyebrows be removed?

- Unwanted cosmetic tattooing around the eyebrows and / or lips, or tattooed eyeliner, can usually be lightened and improved with one of several laser treatments. A test spot may be necessary to determine the best laser to remove a particular pigment. Certain tattoo inks, especially those with titanium dioxide or ferric oxide, will turn jet black when treated with a Q-Switched laser. In some cases, you will be advised of this possibility and treatment with the CO2 or Erbium laser will be recommended. You may require multiple treatments for optimal results.

Consultation Appointment Required / Payment

- A consultation appointment is required before scheduling tattoo removal treatment. The cost of the consultation will be applied towards the removal of the tattoo. The cost of the tattoo treatments are not usually covered by insurance and payment for tattoo removal needs to be received 10 days prior to the procedure, unless prior arrangements have been made with your Provider or our Business Office.

If you would like to schedule a consultation to find out if
Laser Tattoo Removal is right for you, please call **520.795.7729**.

For more information, please visit our website at www.pimaderm.com.