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BIODEGRADABLE ELECTRONIC IMPLANTS CAN BE LEFT IN THE BODY

 SPORT & FITNESS

Researchers at Tufts University in Massachusetts have created electronics that harmlessly disintegrate in the body.

Science fiction books have long predicted the convergence of humans and technology but – just as the ingestible *Proteus* sensor is helping people monitor their biometrics – our latest spotting could be helping this pairing become reality. Researchers at Tufts University in Massachusetts have created *transient electronics* that harmlessly biodegrade in the body. Made of silicon and magnesium, and coated in a silk protein, the team built ultrathin circuits that could be used to create medical devices that can be used inside the body. The amount of silk coating determines how long it takes for the device to disintegrate, meaning that scientists will be able to pre-program its lifespan. Once the casing has deteriorated, the circuit begins to dissolve when it reacts with biofluids and will disappear within days. It is believed that the research will allow doctors to insert electronics into the body of a patient without the need for invasive surgery to retrieve it. Transient electronics could save pain for patients and also aims to replace non-biodegradable devices, saving more material from ending up in landfill. Could this be the future of bioelectronics? Spotted by: Tracy Chong

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