

Wearable Health Sensors

Matt Small:

It sounds like a work of science fiction: electronics embedded in stretchable silicone, worn as a second skin, but it's very real, and the advances made by scientists can be seen at this lab in Sweden.

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Known as e-skin, the technology's been around for years, but these scientists are testing a new version that works as a wireless transmitter. That means it can send real-time data without being plugged in to a computer like other models.

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This e-skin is placed on the abdomen and can report on a patient's breathing. For now, it's attached to the body with two belts. Researchers say they're working to attach it directly to the skin.

Shi Cheng:

I-If you are, um, wearing a sensor device, you-you would like to have your normal life. You'd like to, uh, move around, walk around, th-that's for sure. And, uh, in that case you don't want to, um, have this, uh, bulky, uh, rigid device.

Matt Small:

While there're already medical devices that are attached to the body, like pacemakers, the hope is that this device would be able to notice something abnormal and then send warning signals to the computer, or even a cell phone, which would alert emergency services. Along with patients with breathing problems, researchers believe that future e-skins will be able to track patients with heart problems or epilepsy.

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Matt Small, The Associated Press.

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