

Smart polymer helps surgeons

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A German researcher has created a "smart" polymer surgeons can use to close stitches from inside the body of a patient.

Professor Andreas Lendlein, a chemist at the GKSS Research Center in Teltow, near Berlin, said the polymer can be placed into the body in compressed form, then change back to its original shape, do its job and dissolve, Deutsche Welle reported Monday.

"Thus you can introduce a bulky implant in a compressed form into the body through a small cut, such as in keyhole surgery," Lendlein said. "By warming the room temperature to body temperature the implant unfurls and then the whole thing disintegrates after a certain (amount of) time. It dissolves so that you don't have to carry out a second operation to remove the implant."

Lendlein has also created a special thread for surgeons that makes itself into a loop once inside the body.

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