Abstract:

You could transfer digital images from your camera just by touching the PC while the camera is hanging off your neck. Like-wise music from an MP3 player in your pocket could be easily transferred to your wireless headphones without any need for cabling. Wow, imagine the possibilities and the headaches.

Your body could soon be the backbone of a broadband personal data network linking your mobile phone or MP3 player to a cordless headset, your digital camera to a PC or printer, and all the gadgets you carry around to each other.

These personal area networks are already possible using radio-based technologies, such as Wi-Fi or Bluetooth, or just plain old cables to connect devices. But NTT, the Japanese communications company, has developed a technology called RedTacton, which it claims can send data over the surface of the skin at speeds of up to 2Mbps -- equivalent to a fast broadband data connection.

Music from an MP3 player in your pocket would pass through your clothing and shoot over your body to headphones in your ears. Instead of fiddling around with a cable to connect your digital camera to your computer, you could transfer pictures just by touching the PC while the camera is around your neck. And since data can pass from one body to another, you could also exchange electronic business cards by shaking hands, trade music files by dancing cheek to cheek, or swap phone numbers just by kissing.