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A new smartphone device to detect skin cancer early

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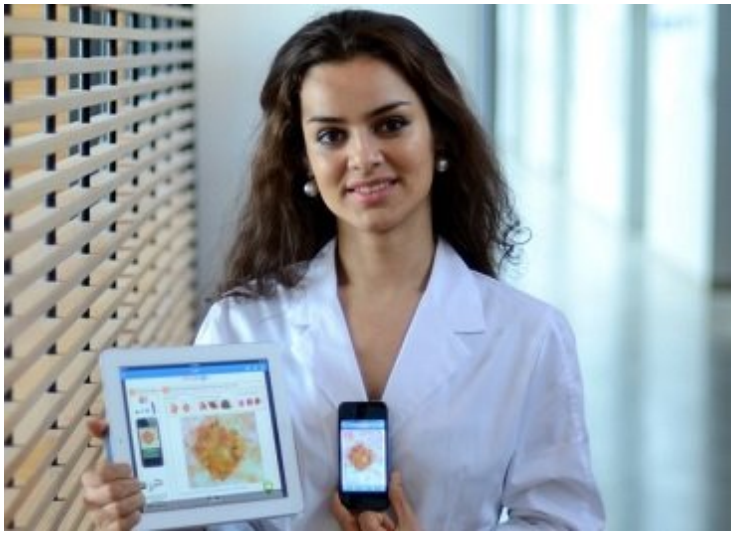

Simon Fraser University PhD alumna Ms Maryam Sadeghi has developed MoleScope, an innovative hand-held tool that uses a smartphone to monitor skin for signs of cancer.

Ms Sadeghi, who laid the groundwork for the device during her PhD thesis research, has spent three years transitioning from academic research to her start-up venture, MetaOptima Technology.

The company's inaugural product is MoleScope, a device that enables people to monitor their moles and skin health, share images with family and healthcare providers and eventually, connect with skin specialists online.

"I love working with people to help them manage their health. This is exactly what I imagined doing as a student and now my vision is being realized through the launch of MoleScope, and my company, MetaOptima Technology," said Ms Sadeghi.

MoleScope comprises a mini-microscope that attaches to a smartphone, an app (iOS, Android, or web compatible) and a cloud-based analytical platform called DermEngine. Once people take high-quality, high-resolution images of suspicious moles or skin abnormalities, they can archive images and communicate concerns with others.

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Visual changes in skin often signal the possibility of skin cancer. It is estimated that 70 percent of skin cancer is caught by individuals and family members.

The company has developed two versions of the product: a consumer version expected to retail at $149; and a more expensive professional version to be presented at the World Congress of Dermatology meeting.

MoleScope has received approval from Health Canada, and is FDA-registered as a Class I medical device in the USA, CE mark in the EU and TGA approval in Australia is expected shortly. The company is also initiating an early adopter program with qualified dermatologists.

Ms Sadeghi won recognition during the research and development phase of MoleScope winning WaveFront's Wireless Prize package ($40,000) in the BCIC-New Ventures Competition in 2013, plus a prize in the Plug & Play Silicon Valley competition in Vancouver in July 2014.

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MoleScope is to be unveiled at world dermatology conference in Vancouver, June 9-13.

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