Mobile teledermoscopy for short-term monitoring of atypical moles

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Allowing patients to use mobile devices to capture skin images appears to be a feasible and effective method for short-term monitoring of atypical nevi (moles), according to an article published online by *JAMA Dermatology*.

Short-term monitoring is an established approach for atypical moles and the standard amount of monitoring time is 2.5 to 4.5 months. About 19 percent of moles that are monitored will exhibit some change and 11 percent to 18 percent of those changed lesions will be diagnosed as malignant. Monitoring of moles is ideally suited for teledermoscopy, whereby patients take pictures of a monitored lesion via a mobile dermatoscope (which is attached to a mobile phone equipped with a camera) and electronically transmit them to a dermatologist for evaluation, according to the study background.

Xinyuan Wu, B.A., of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, and coauthors examined the feasibility, effectiveness and patient receptivity for teledermoscopy for short-term monitoring by recruiting 34 patients of two dermatologists, with 29 patients completing follow-up. During the study, images were acquired in the office by a dermatologist and by the patient with a mobile phone at baseline and follow-up three to four months later. Of the 29 patients, 28 had images that were able to be evaluated.

The study found that diagnoses between conventional office visits and teledermoscopy were deemed to be in near-complete agreement. Patients

were receptive to teledermoscopy for the short-term monitoring of moles.

"Our results showed that the use of teledermoscopy in short-term monitoring is highly feasible, has strong diagnostic concordance with conventional clinical visits and is well received by patients," the authors conclude.

In a related editorial, Monika Janda, Ph.D., of Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia, and coauthors write: "The study by Wu and colleagues in this issue adds significantly to the discussion on whether regular follow-up visits with clinicians could be replaced by patient self-monitoring with remote feedback by a teledermatologist. ... In conclusion, the findings from Wu and colleagues provide further support for the feasibility of consumer-driven mobile teledermoscopy."

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