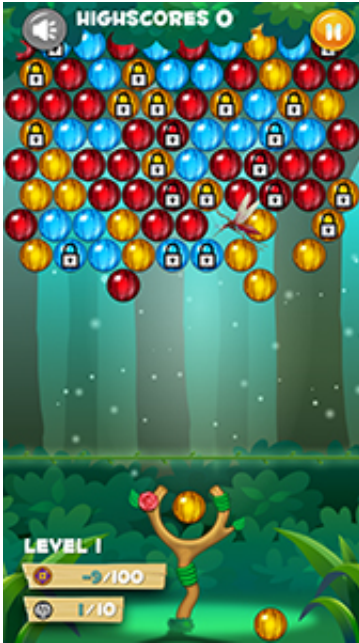


Videogames against malaria

April 25 2016



Shoot bubbles while helping research against malaria? It is possible with MalariaSpot Bubbles, an online game that launches today, April 25, World Malaria Day. Players analyze digitalized images of parasites to differentiate between the five species that cause malaria. They do it while having fun shooting at mosquitoes and bubbles. It is an application to learning through play and to contribute to the research of new diagnosis methods. MalariaSpot Bubbles has been developed by researchers of the Biomedical Imaging Technologies Group at the Technical University of Madrid - International Excellence Campus

Moncloa.

MalariaSpot Bubbles is an educational tool to research how young students acquire skills through gaming. During World Malaria Day thousands of students will participate in "Olympic Malaria Videogames" playing MalariaSpot Bubbles, a video game that uses images of digitized blood samples. During this day school teams will compete to become the best virtual hunters of malaria parasites.

"Digital natives around the world spend millions of hours a day playing video games. MalariaSpot Bubbles is an experiment to explore this potential as a new solution to global health problems" says Daniel Cuadrado, MalariaSpot developer and researcher at the Technical University of Madrid.

MalariaSpot Bubbles not only allow players to learn, but also to participate in the research of new tools for collaborative diagnosis online. Malaria is diagnosed by observing a blood smear with a microscope and looking for parasites. Part of the diagnostic protocol is to identify which of the five different species that cause [malaria](#) is present in the blood. "This is especially important to provide the proper treatment to the patients", says María Linares, researcher at Hospital 12 de Octubre and MalariaSpot biomedical specialist. The aim of MalariaSpot Bubbles is to research if remote diagnosis could be performed collectively by non experts, expanding the concept initiated four years ago with the first version of the game MalariaSpot. This project has been recently featured in the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet*.

More information: malariaspot.org/bubbles/

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