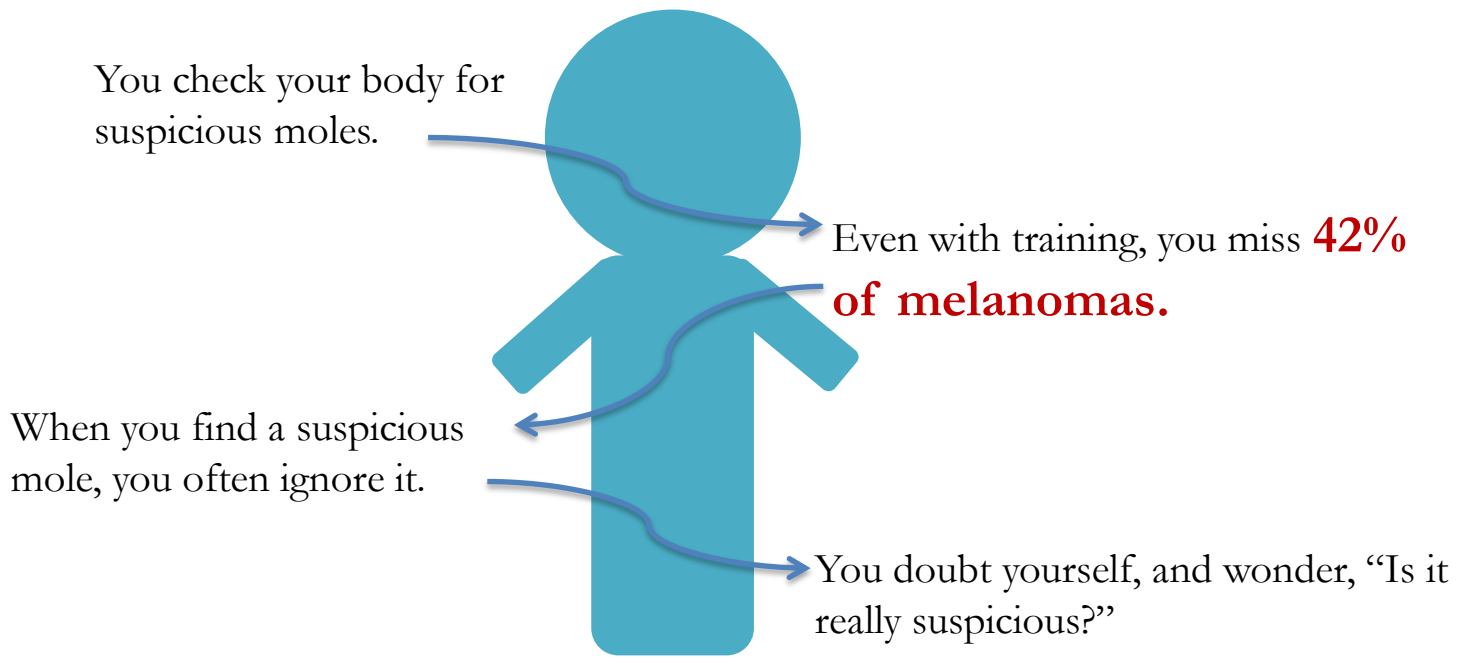# Mole Crowdsourcing:
A New Way to Find Skin Cancer

Detecting all types of skin cancer is an important public health goal; however, the most deadly type, and the focus of most screening efforts, is melanoma. Melanoma incidence has been increasing steadily over the last 30 years. Researchers at the University of Utah and Texas Tech University have identified a new approach for finding suspicious moles that could be melanoma: mole crowdsourcing. To understand the value of this new approach, it is useful to consider shortcomings of the current approach (individual visual identification during skin self-examination).

Current Approach: Skin Self-Examination (SSE)

You check your body for suspicious moles.

Even with training, you miss **42% of melanomas.**

When you find a suspicious mole, you often ignore it.

You doubt yourself, and wonder, "Is it really suspicious?"

New Approach: Mole Crowdsourcing After SSE

Imagine if **100 people** could look at pictures of your moles.

Research says:
If at least **19 out of 100** think a mole is suspicious, then you should be concerned.
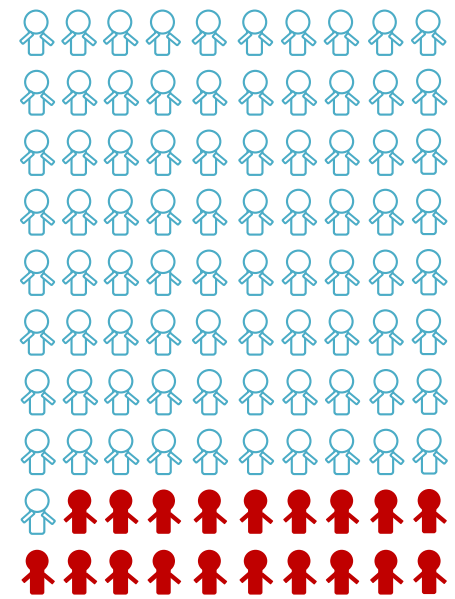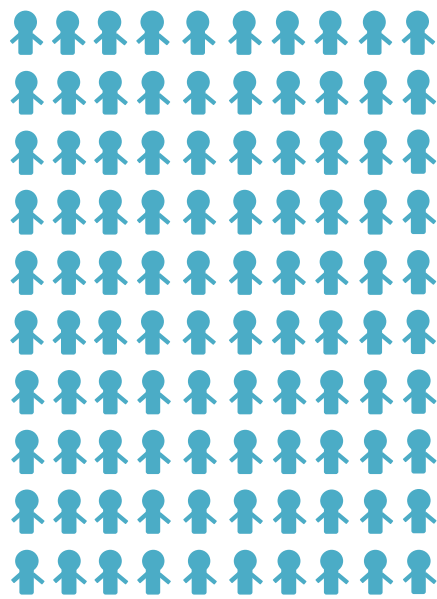
Why?

Groups are very good at finding skin cancer. Even without training, groups can find **90% of melanomas**.

For example, researchers had 500 adults look at 40 images of moles (9 of which were melanomas). For the normal moles (in blue), it was rare for more than 19% of people to be suspicious. For the melanomas (in red), 8 of the 9 images were rated as suspicious by 19% or more of adults.
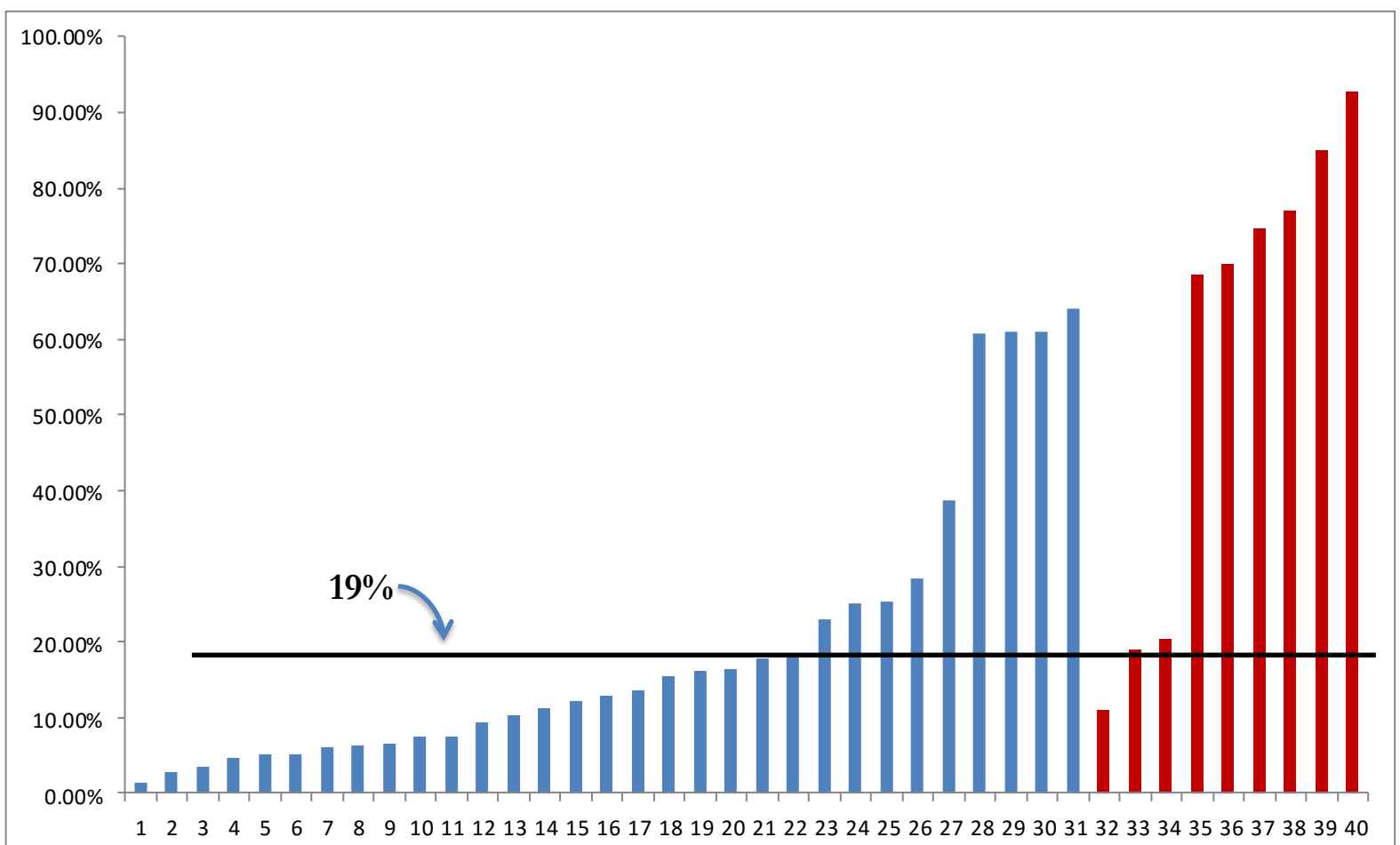
This research suggests that it may be valuable to develop mole crowdsourcing applications that allow people to upload and rate mole imagery. These applications could be developed for cell phones, the Internet, or other web-enabled devices. It also supports continued research of crowdsourcing in the context of skin cancer control.

HCAT
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