

FTC takes aim at 'cancer-detecting' app featured on Dr.Oz show

It seemed too good to be true — a \$4.99 cellphone app that could help you figure out if moles growing on your body were cancerous. And according to the Federal Trade Commission, that's exactly what "Mole Detective" was: too good to be true.

A lawsuit filed by the FTC Monday alleges that two Chicago-based firms that marketed the iPhone and Android app violated federal advertising rules, by making untrue or unsubstantiated claims about its effectiveness in determining the risk of melanoma. The app was available on the Apple app store and the Android Google Play marketplace from January 2013 until December 2013, raking in at least \$50,000 in sales, the feds say.

Users were supposed to use the cellphone's camera to photograph moles on their body. The app would then use algorithms to analyze photos to determine the risk that the moles could be cancerous. Though the makers of the app included disclaimers that users should always defer to the judgment of a medical professional, the FTC says their claims about the app's effectiveness still crossed the line.

Avron Boris Lasarow, a businessman who bought the rights to the app said that it got a lot of downloads after it was featured on the Dr. Oz show, but that the app, which has not been available since the FTC investigation began, always came with a warning that "it should be used for educational purposes only."

Read full, original article: Cellphone 'cancer app' comes under FTC fire