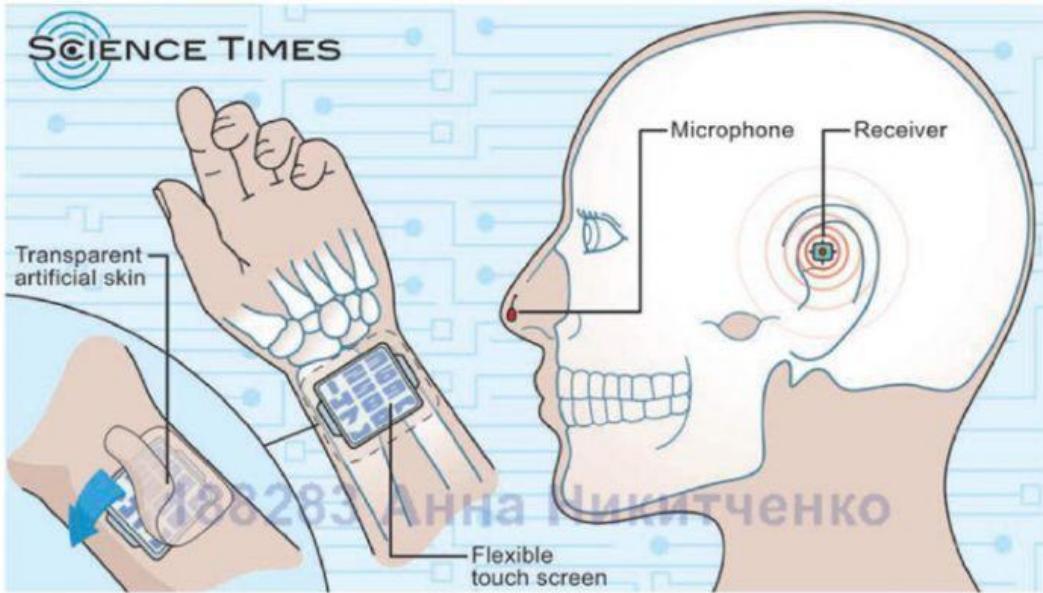


LATEST HEADLINES

SCIENCE TIMES



FEATURE: NOVEMBER 2018

A new idea in mobiles Suzy Costello

1 Have you ever wanted to make a phone call but you couldn't? Perhaps because there is no signal. Or because you've left your mobile at home. Or because your battery has gone dead. It's frustrating, right? So far no one has found a solution to the problem of not receiving a signal when you're in the middle of the country, but now, at last, someone has come up with a mobile phone that is always with you and never runs out of energy. BiPho Phones have just brought out their latest invention.

5

2 The Permaphone® is a telephone implant: that is a telephone which goes under your skin. The receiver sits behind your ear, the microphone is in the tip of your nose and the flexible touch screen is under a layer of completely transparent artificial skin on the inside of your wrist. All you need is a quick visit to a hospital for a simple operation and then you are your mobile; a walking talking telephone. And the good news is that this phone doesn't need batteries. It gets its power from your body. Every time you move, you produce kinetic energy. The Permaphone® captures this energy and so never goes dead. Or at least, not until you do.

10

3 Mobile phone companies have been working for many years on phone implants. The idea has been around ever since the 1940s when science-fiction writer Robert Heinlein first mentioned it in his book *The Puppet Masters*. But there has always been a problem: the risks from receiving radiation inside your head. BiPho say they have solved this problem because their phone implant uses a very low level of radiation which is not dangerous to human health.

15

4 The company has been working on their new phone for years and in my humble opinion they have produced something rather special. The operation took only five minutes and was completely painless and since I left the hospital I've been experimenting with my new phone implant. I must say it's quite impressive. After a day or two it feels perfectly natural: just like a part of your body. The phone has all the usual applications: GPS, mp3, camera, etc., and it's very user-friendly too: it's so simple to switch the phone on and off, to turn the volume up or down and to access all the functions.

20

5 So are phone implants the future of mobile phone technology? Well, maybe. Certainly, it's great to have a phone that you can't forget and which never needs batteries. However, there are some drawbacks too. For example, when you have a cold it may not be very convenient to have the microphone in your nose. And although BiPho say it is completely waterproof, I wonder how confident you would feel when you go swimming with your Permaphone®. And finally, one more question that they haven't answered yet: do you need to go back to hospital for another operation every time you want to update your phone?

25

Read the article more carefully and match paragraphs 1–5 with the headings a–g. There are two extra headings.

- a Complete and easy to use
- b Fact is stranger than fiction
- c How does it work?
- d It's not all perfect
- e No signal? Who cares?
- f Safe to use
- g A new answer to old problems

Answer the questions

- 1 What three problems with making phone calls does the writer mention?
- 2 In which parts of the body does the *Permaphone*® go?
- 3 Where does it get its power from?
- 4 Who first wrote about the idea of a phone implant?
- 5 How does it feel to have a *Permaphone*®?
- 6 In which two situations might you have problems with a *Permaphone*®?

Vocabulary Complete the sentences with the correct form of these phrases from the article.

bring out come up with go dead
run out of switch off turn up

- 1 The play is about to begin. Please check that you have _____ your mobile phones.
- 2 Put it on loudspeaker and _____ the volume so that everyone can hear.
- 3 During the storm the phone suddenly _____.
- 4 They've _____ a new 3D TV. I've heard it's amazing!
- 5 I wanted to buy one, but they've _____ them in the shop.
- 6 Can you _____ any good ideas for new applications for mobiles?

In groups, discuss these questions.

- 1 Will there ever be mobile phone implants like the one in the article?
- 2 Would you like to have a mobile phone implant? Why?/Why not?
- 3 What applications would you like to have on your mobile?