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Eye spy: U.S. scientists develop eye-shaped camera

Wed Aug 6, 2008 8:00pm BST

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By Julie Steenhuisen

CHICAGO (Reuters) - Borrowing one of nature's best designs, U.S. scientists have built an eye-shaped camera using standard sensor materials and say it could improve the performance of digital cameras and enhance imaging of the human body.

The device might even lead to the development of prosthetic devices including a bionic eye, they said.

"This is the first time we've demonstrated a camera on a curved surface to really make it look like a human eye," said Yonggang Huang of Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, who reported his findings on Wednesday in the journal Nature.

Huang, who worked on the project with John Rogers of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, developed a relatively simple solution to the long-running problem of transferring microelectronic components onto a curved surface without breaking them.

"If you simply bend it, those materials are brittle like a ceramic bowl. They break," Huang said in a telephone interview.

To solve this, Huang and Rogers developed a mesh-like material made up of tiny squares that hold the photodetectors and electronic components. The squares are connected by tiny wires that give each component the ability to mold to a curved surface.

IMPROVING THE FIELD OF VISION

"This approach allows us to put electronics in places where we couldn't before," Rogers said in a statement. [Continued...](#)

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