

Amazon Patents New Alexa Feature that Knows When You're Ill and Offers you Medicine | The Telegraph

By James Cook

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Amazon has patented a new version of its virtual assistant Alexa which can automatically detect when you're ill and offer to sell you medicine.

The proposed feature would analyse speech and identify other signs of illness or emotion.

One example given in the patent is a woman coughing and sniffing while she speaks to her Amazon Echo device. Alexa first suggests some chicken soup to cure her cold, and then offers to order cough drops on Amazon.

If Amazon were to introduce this technology, it could compete with a service planned by the NHS. Health Secretary Matt Hancock said earlier this year that the NHS was working on making information from its NHS Choices online service available through Alexa.

Amazon's system, however, doesn't need to ask people whether they're ill - it would just know automatically by analysing their speech.

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