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Now, headphones that measure heart rate

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Singapore: Intel is all set to challenge Samsung and Apple in developing cool wearable health devices. Reportedly, the company has partnered with SMS Audio, a global headphone and accessories brand, to create a new category of wearables or smart headphones with sensors that can measure the heart rate.

"Intel is focused on driving innovation in the wearable technology segment by partnering with lifestyle brands like SMS Audio that complement our technology and design expertise," said Mr Michael Bell, corporate vice president and general manager of the New Devices Group at Intel. He added, "With SMS Audio, we will bring smart headphones to the market. These eliminate the inconvenience of add-on devices with an integrated, one-device fitness accessory offering high-end style and premier sound quality for an exceptional fitness experience. This is a prime example of Intel driving innovation in wearable devices while being a fore-runner in merging lifestyle and technology."

"The wearable technology collaboration between SMS Audio and Intel elevates our capability to bring smart exercise to consumers," said Mr Brian Nohe, president, SMS Audio. "With the introduction of the SMS Audio BioSport In-Ear Headphones powered by Intel, we're now the first to provide this level of integrated, seamless and helpful biometric information to inspire customers to advance their fitness experience," he added.

The companies said that the headphones will deliver high-end audio quality. They will integrate biometric sensors in a custom heart-rate monitor. They also mentioned about having patented an ear-hook design that makes the headphones comfortable.

The device has a built-in optical sensor which continuously measures heart rate during intense exercise, states of relaxation and every moment in between, while dynamically removing noise signals caused by body motion and ambient light. It will be sweat and water-resistant, and will synchronize with the RunKeeper step-tracking app.

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It will come with a tangle-free cord, an in-line microphone, neoprene carrying case, and three sizes of ear gels and hooks. It is slated to hit the market later this year.

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