The Benefits of Fitness Trackers for Diabetics

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The Many Pros (and a Few Cons) of Fitness Trackers for Diabetics

Gadgets can make life easier, more interesting, and the best ones are just plain fun to use. When it comes to disease management, apps and devices that track your fitness are some of the most helpful gadgets; they take a lot of the guesswork out of monitoring calorie intake and your level of activity, and at the end of the day, this will help you stay strong and healthy to manage your condition more easily. Have you ever wondered about fitness trackers for diabetics?

Even though diabetes involves more than counting calories and taking more steps throughout the day, that does not mean fitness trackers cannot help you out. If you find the right fitness gadget — one that combines effective monitoring and an enjoyable interface — you could make some pretty big strides in how you manage your blood sugar, respond to problems, and talk to your healthcare team.

How a Fitness Tracker will Improve Your Diabetes Management

If you have been relying on your instinct and estimation to stay on track with your diabetes management, you have probably run into a few bumps along the way. After all, accuracy is crucial when it comes to tracking blood sugar, maintaining good habits, and changing bad behaviors, and it is difficult to be accurate without taking measurements.

Luckily, a simple fitness tracker can round up all the pertinent info into one tidy, readable bundle. Basis, Nike, Fitbit, Jawbone, and other major players in the virtual fitness scene allow you to plug in things like your daily menu details, exercise goals, and fitness accomplishments to help you lose weight. But that is only the beginning — they have other long-term and far-reaching benefits, too.

You Can't Hide From Your Habits

When you begin to record your meals, amount of exercise, and how much quality sleep you are getting each day, you will get a much clearer picture of how well you are handling your diabetes challenges – a picture that is very difficult to ignore.

There’s a reason why the people who keep dietary logs, anxiety journals, and other close readings on personal habits tend to reach and maintain their goals better than other people; the info is in front of their face, and they are forced to acknowledge it. You can either continue in your current habits despite the data – which usually comes with a heap of guilt and regret – or respond in a positive and proactive way.

Clarify Carb and Calorie Control

Keeping tabs on how many calories you take in can be a bit of a struggle, especially when you eat a variety of homemade meals. However, once you work out how many calories, carbs, and nutrients your favorite dishes

contain, you can store that info and simply apply it again the next time you enjoy that meal. It makes it much easier to accurately account for everything you eat and drink.

Tracking your calories is not only about counting what goes in – you also need to monitor how many calories you are burning each day. Exercise is vital for controlling your diabetes and avoiding complications, and many fitness trackers can sync with your specific diabetes apps to automatically calculate your carbohydrate allowance and insulin needs based on how active you have been on any given day.

Fun Motivation to Stay on Track

There are plenty of programs that make a game out of working towards your fitness goals, and that can have a bigger impact than you might imagine. You may not think a little-animated badge will keep you going to the gym three times a week, but once you begin to connect to other users and follow your improvements week to week, your goals become enticing challenges rather than bothersome chores, and you can share your accomplishments with other users.

Positive peer pressure can keep you reaching for the next award, badge or level, and that may be enough to keep you on track. Even if there is no tangible prize that comes with “winning”, your health will thank you for your perseverance.

Your Doctors Will Appreciate It

Many fitness apps allow you to send your recorded data straight to your healthcare team, so everyone can stay up-to-date and on the same page. If you commit to recording your diet, exercise, blood sugar readings, and any other variable that may affect your diabetes, you will have a handy reference to use the next time you meet with your doctor to discuss your health.

The idea behind any fitness tracking device is to get a better handle on your habits and routine, not to punish yourself for failures. You do not have to strive for perfection, and it is not the end of the world if you miss your mark in any given week. Instead, aim for the long-term benefits that come with pinpointing your strengths and focusing on the areas where you can improve.

The Downside of Data Management

It’s great having various devices that talk to each other about your weight, BMI and overall health as long as they communicate clearly and accurately. Unfortunately, that is not always the case.

Not all apps are compatible with all operating systems, and certain companies prefer to have their brand stand alone (like Nike’s FuelBand — it stores data fine, but will not send it to any other centralized repository of information). If you are using a program that tallies points when you string together workout days, one little syncing error can set you back to zero and derail your motivation.

If you find that your fitness tracker is frustrating more than helping, it is time to take another look at what you need and what will keep you engaged. With dozens of fitness trackers out there, and more popping up all the time, there may be a better, more streamlined option to help you take more control over your diabetes.