

The Gamification of Health and Wellness

Have you bought into the gamification of health and wellness yet? Gamification, defined as the use of game-thinking and game mechanics in a non-game context in order to engage users and solve problems, has been gaining momentum among the latest trends designed to help make us healthier. Whether it's a wearable sensor in your watch or wristband or a corporate wellness program that uses competitions and team challenges to help employees stay healthy, more and more digital health technology innovators are creating products that bridge the gap between being fun to use and helping you achieve your wellness goals.

The recent Consumer Electronics Show featured some of the latest and greatest sensors, devices, and products. For example, the Fitbit Flex:

The wristband is waterproof and has no display other than a tiny row of dots that light up. It automatically uploads data to your smartphone, whose app acts as the hub for all the information you'd like to monitor. If food is something you need help monitoring, you can keep detailed logs of your meals to calculate how many calories you've consumed....They've also integrated effective coaching and training tricks to keep users on track. For example, it can send encouraging or taunting text messages or e-mails and award badges, depending on what motivates you. It also acts as a little social network, letting you connect with and compete against friends.

Even video games are being re-thought, as a potential way to help keep kids health and active. Healthcare giant UnitedHealthcare partnered on a pilot program with the makers of 'Dance, Dance Revolution' on a gym-class friendly game to keep kids on their feet and off the couch. They are also working on a project to turn the Xbox Kinect into a physical therapy coach. The game will count reps and monitor the body's movements to ensure the exercises are being done properly.

Some of the most promising developments in the digital health tech arena are for the chronically ill and the elderly:

With the right combination of sensors and apps, they'll be able to take a reading at home and transmit data to the cloud, where their doctors can monitor progress and look for red flags that they might miss during a short office visit. Ideal Life's connected systems include small devices that measure blood glucose, blood pressure, heart rates and oxygen saturation, and it has a scale specifically for congestive heart failure patients. At CES, the company announced it was teaming up with ADT on an integrated alert system.

These remote health management services are appealing to hospitals, doctors and health programs because they can cut down on costly medical care by catching issues early and helping people avoid trips to the emergency room. But all that data being collected is valuable in other ways. Providers can amass the anonymous data for all patients to look for trends, assess programs and fine-tune treatment programs.

What apps, games and other innovative digital health tools are you excited about?

+About Steelcase

+Customer Care

+Legal Notices

+Connect With Us

+Contact Us

Steelcase

© 1996 - 2022 Steelcase Inc. is a global leader in office furniture, interior architecture and space solutions for offices, hospitals and classrooms. Our furniture is inspired by innovative research in workspace design.