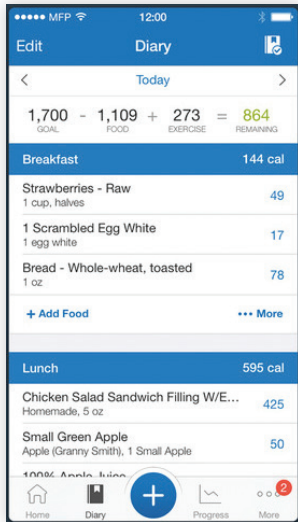


SPPACES: MEDICAL APP REVIEWS

David Rebedew, MD



MY FITNESS PAL

MyFitnessPal allows users to track calories, monitor progress toward weight-management goals, and gain support from an online community.

Source: MyFitnessPal LLC

Platforms available: Windows smartphone; Android smartphone or tablet using Android OS 2.1 or higher; iPhone, iPod Touch, or iPad using

iOS 7.0 or later (optimized for iPhone 5/6/6+).

Pertinence to primary care practice: Preventing or decreasing the burden of many chronic diseases involves encouraging patients to adopt a healthy lifestyle and diet. However, it is difficult to motivate patients to make these changes during a 15-minute clinic appointment. MyFitnessPal allows patients to track caloric intake and expenditures and become involved in the MyFitnessPal online community where they may share accomplishments, recipes, and weight-management tips.

Authoritativeness/accuracy/currency of information: MyFitnessPal includes nutritional data for more than 5 million food items and activity information for more than 350 exercises. MyFitnessPal notes on its blog (<http://bit.ly/1vEGEDQ>) that 75 million people using the app have lost a total of more than 180 million pounds. However, a randomized, controlled trial of 212 overweight/obese

SURVEY: WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE APP?

Help us select which app to review in the next issue of *Family Practice Management* by voting for your favorite app in our three-question survey: <http://www.aafp.org/fpm/appsurvey>. The focus for the March/April survey is diabetes apps.

APP REVIEW CRITERIA

- S** – Source or developer of app
- P** – Platforms available
- P** – Pertinence to primary care practice
- A** – Authoritativeness/accuracy/currency of information
- C** – Cost
- E** – Ease of use
- S** – Sponsor(s)

patients found no statistically significant difference in weight loss, blood pressure, or satisfaction at three and six months post-intervention between patients in the MyFitnessPal group and those in the standard care group.¹ The app is updated daily, with a new version being released approximately every two weeks.

Cost: Free

Ease of use: MyFitnessPal is customizable to the user. First-time users input their weight goal (lose, maintain, or gain), activity level, weekly weight goal, and ultimate weight goal. To help the user accomplish his or her goal, the app can send reminders to enter calories periodically throughout the day. Moreover, MyFitnessPal can integrate with other apps or step-counting devices (including FitBit and Apple's Health app) to provide the most accurate energy expenditure data. Initially, it is somewhat cumbersome to enter foods and exercises because the app lists so many similar options; however, users may use the barcode scanner in the app to add foods more easily. Over time, as the app remembers the user's common food, meal, and exercise entries, it takes only minutes per day to keep track of total caloric intake and expenditures.

MyFitnessPal is available in multiple languages.

Sponsors: Not applicable

Rating: ★★★★★

MyFitnessPal is a useful resource for patients interested in lifestyle modification given its extensive nutritional information, ease of use, and free online weight management support; however, it may help only motivated patients lose weight. **FPM**

1. Laing BY, Mangione CM, Tseng CH, et al. Effectiveness of a smartphone application for weight loss compared with usual care in overweight primary care patients: a randomized, controlled trial. *Ann Intern Med.* 2014;161(10 Suppl):S5-S12.

About the Author

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