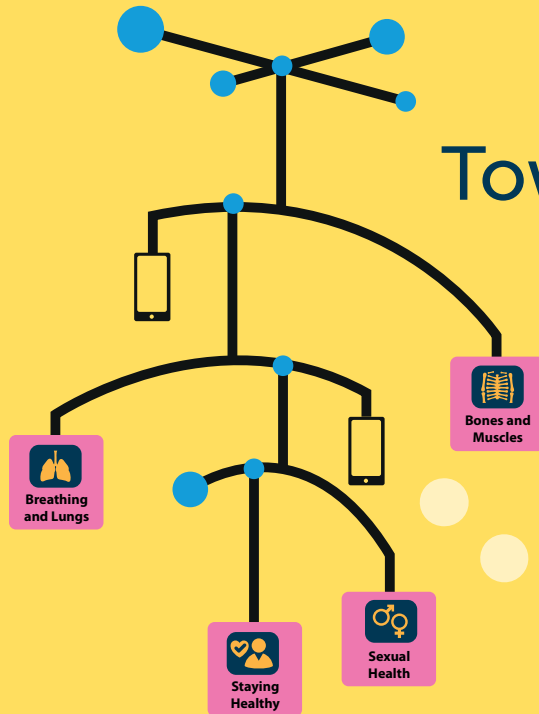


Towards a balanced life

A toolkit to help you

A toolkit to help you



my health apps™

DHACA (Digital Health and Care Alliance)

DHACA is here for people like you. People who want to harness the power of mobile applications to transform their services through a 'digital first' philosophy to help the public, patients, informal carers and communities self-manage and co-produce care services.



DHACA is pleased to support PatientView, its partners' and its community's vision for a healthier world enabled by apps.



Join us at **dhaca.org.uk**

Introduction

This toolkit is written to help you:

- **think about how health apps could benefit you**
- **make an informed choice when looking for health apps**
- **get the most from health apps**

The reason for creating this toolkit is simple. At the time of writing, there are more than 100,000 health apps, and hundreds more are launched each week.

Within this vast pool, there are some genuinely useful, helpful apps that can help you look after your health, or the health of someone you care for, but they can be hard to find.

This is not a technical guide, full of technobabble. It's based on the questions patients, carers and doctors have about apps, and aims to be a starting point for you. We'll steer clear of jargon unless absolutely necessary. One piece of jargon we will use is to define health apps as small computer programmes, usually used on mobile devices like smartphones, iPads or tablets, to help people stay healthy or look after a medical condition.

Acknowledgements

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We would also like to thank all our partners – European Connected Health Alliance, European Health Forum Gastein, GSK, Health 2.0, Janssen, NHS England, Novo Nordisk, and Telefonica - for their support in the development and dissemination of myhealthapps.net and this guide.

In addition, we are grateful to the following individuals and organisations for their insightful comments and contributions: European Pharmaceutical Students' Association (EPSA); David Grainger, Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA); Andy Jones, AstraZeneca; Tony Kane, Tony Kane Consulting; Charles Lowe, Royal Society of Medicine and Digital Health and Care Alliance (DHACA); Jocelyn Parkes, Royal Pharmaceutical Society; Dr Mike Short CBE, Telefonica; and the European Commission for its encouragement for myhealthapps.net.

Finally, we would like to thank all the app developers whose apps are featured on the myhealthapps.net website, and whose icons are being used for illustrative purposes in this booklet.



European Connected Health Alliance

Delivering leadership for the development of Connected and MHealth markets and practice across Europe and beyond

ECHAlliance connects people and organisations through unmatched opportunities for collaborations and growth in the Connected Health field. Activities include:

- Developing the growing International Connected Health, Permanent Ecosystem Network
- Offering organisations membership of the ECHAlliance - open to all sectors
- Hosting a series of workshops, events and sessions across Europe and beyond

ECHAlliance is pleased to support our member PatientView.

Connect with us at info@echalliance.com

www.echalliance.com



Who are you?

This toolkit can help different people in different ways.


For example, it can help you make informed and confident choices when seeking out apps to...



Patient

- ...help you live with and manage a medical condition or disease.

Carer


- ...help the person you look after to build confidence about using apps to look after their health.
- 



Public

- ...help you stay healthy, for example by monitoring your exercise progress or managing your health.

Healthcare professional

- ...support your patients and carers with managing a condition or disease, or to stay healthy.
- 

How familiar are you with health apps?

Interested beginners

You may, for example, be interested in using apps but:

- feel a bit put off by the technology
- are not sure where to start
- feel overwhelmed by the number of health apps



Some experience, but wary

You may, for example, have tried to use health apps before but:

- felt disappointed about the apps
- used the app a few times and gave up
- felt you chose the wrong apps



Confident user

You may, for example, be a fairly regular user of health apps but have some concerns, including:

- how to protect your privacy
- how can you be sure that the support given in the app is safe and useful?
- what happens when software changes?



Getting the most from this toolkit

This toolkit helps you on each step of your journey towards getting started with health apps.

Each section has its own colour, to make it easy to find your way around.

There are five main sections.

WHY

Page 10

- Why use apps, how they can help
- Why making an informed choice is important, and what to look for

WHERE

Page 18

- Where to find apps
- How to search for them
- Where to download apps

WHAT

Page 28

- What do you need to know about an app?
- What do you need a health app to do?
- What should you watch out for?

HOW

Page 44

- How to download a health app
- How to update an app
- How to build the app into day-to-day health routines

RESOURCES

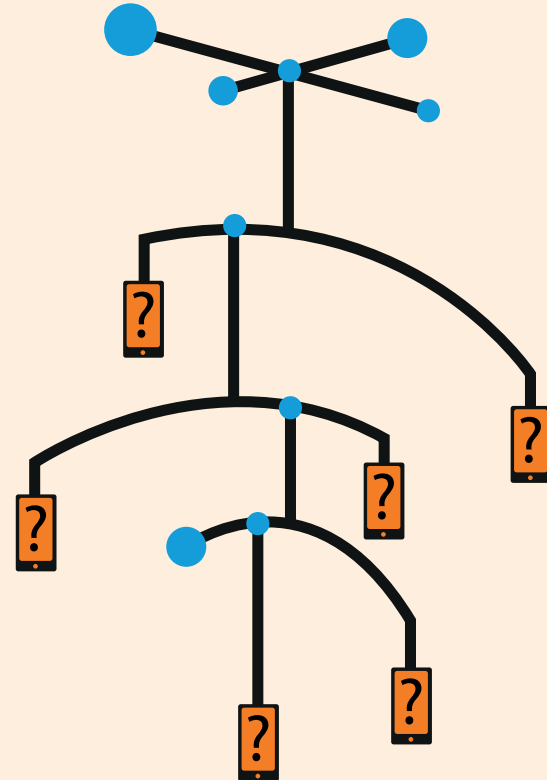
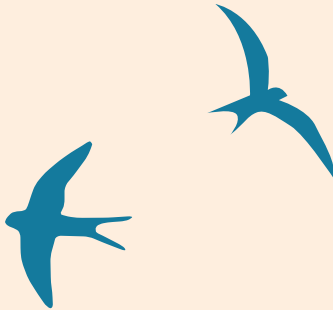
Page 58

- Useful links
- Troubleshooting
- What to do when things go wrong

WHY

Use this section to find out:

- Why use apps, how they can help
- Why making an informed choice is important, and what to look for



As the name suggests, a health app, or application, is simply a piece of computer software that you can use whether you are at home, or out and about to help you or someone you care for:

- **stay healthy**
- **live with a condition or disease**
- **work effectively with doctors and other healthcare professionals**

Developers have made rapid progress in health apps, and although a lot of health apps simply give information, some apps can help people look after their health more effectively.

Best of all, they are designed to be used on devices like smartphones and tablets. Apps can be with you all the time, wherever you go.



Me and My Doctor



Staying Healthy



Other Long-term
Conditions

Why use apps, how they can help

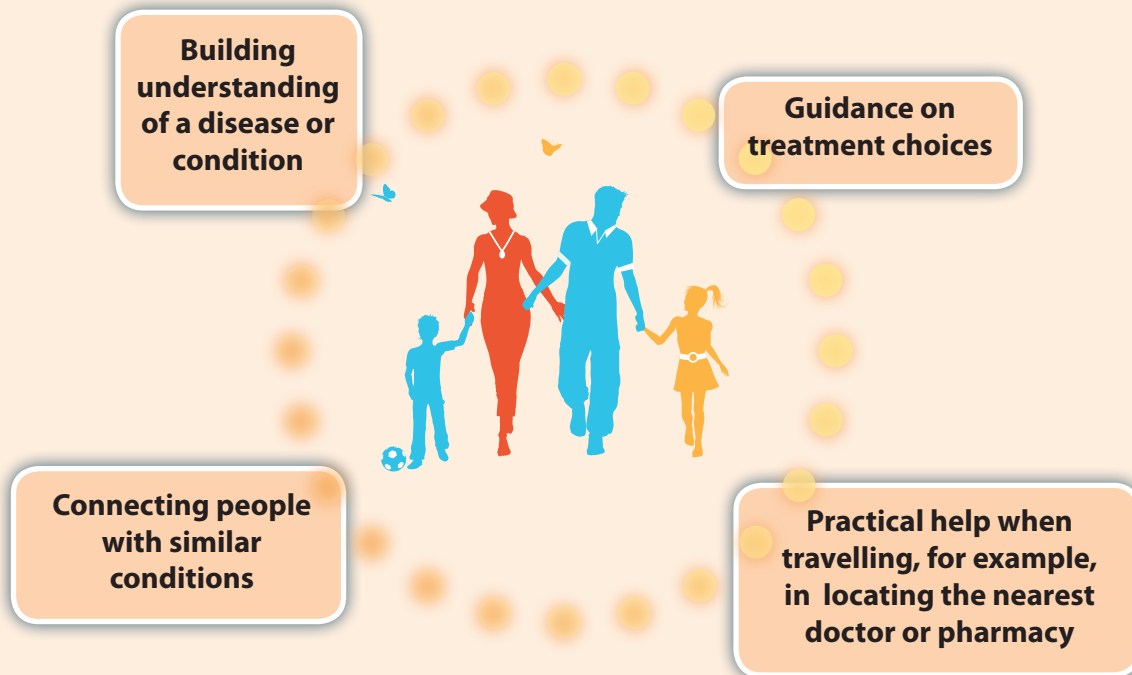
Supporting healthy lifestyles and prevention, for example, through recording personal diet and exercise results

Helping people stay healthy, for example, by providing nutritional information or support to stop smoking

Linking to medical devices, for example, blood sugar or blood pressure monitors

Providing people with psychological, practical or emotional support





Why making an informed choice is important

With already more than 100,000 health apps available, finding what you need can be challenging. When choosing an app, as with any health information on the internet, try to look for health apps that have been tried and recommended for your health needs by groups or organisations you trust, for example, patient groups or health authorities.

What do you most want a health app to be? You may find it helpful to rank the list provided on the next page.

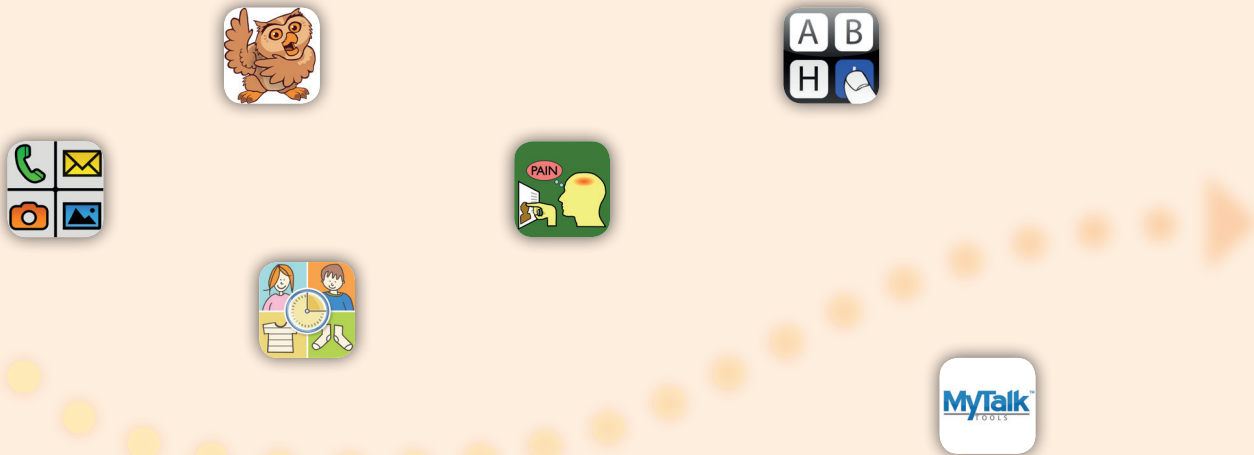


Checklist**Need****How important this is to you
(your ranking)****Safe****Helpful****Accurate****Trusted****Recommended by a reliable source****Up-to-date****Easy-to-use****Free or low-cost**

Why making an informed choice is important

People still spend lots of money on health and self-help books and resources, and yet may be reluctant to look beyond the many free health apps available.

Depending on your health condition, it may be worth looking at a paid-for app if it offers additional useful functions that might help with your specific health needs.





gsk do more
feel better
live longer

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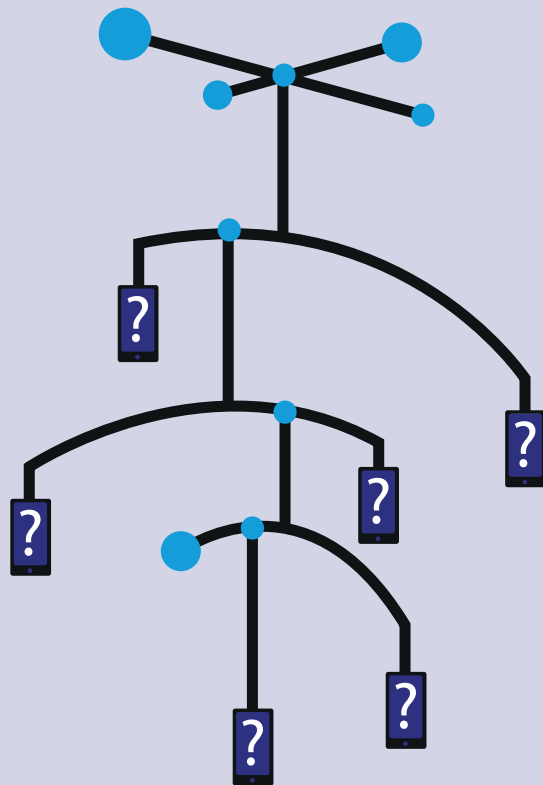
We are doing this by developing innovative products and improving access to healthcare for patients around the world.

Discover more at www.gsk.com

WHERE

Use this section to find out:

- Where to find health apps
- How to search for them
- Where to download apps



Where to find health apps

You can ask other people you trust

If you know other patients or carers managing the same condition, or someone who stays healthy through their diet and exercise routine, find out what they recommend.

Looking beyond people you know:

- Are there any apps recommended or reviewed on a national patient group site you trust?
- Are there any online forums you trust who review apps?
- If you have a good relationship with a healthcare professional like a doctor or nurse, ask if they can recommend any resources, including apps.



How to search for health apps

You can search the internet

As there are currently well over 100,000 health apps, and more launched each week, it is important to use a search engine you trust.

When searching the internet, be as specific as possible to narrow down the search.

When you search within an app store itself (eg Apple iTunes or Google Play) you see icons of relevant apps, but not a list of the essential details.

It is therefore easier to use search engines to find what you want. However, it is worth noting that whereas app stores only show apps available in your country, searching for apps on the internet may reveal examples of apps that you cannot download in your country.



Android



Apple



Blackberry



Nokia



Windows



Browser



Example

If you know that you want an app that will help you monitor your asthma on your iPad by your 'peak flow', type into the search box:

- iTunes app asthma peak flow

In this case, by including the name of the app store for iPhone and iPad apps 'iTunes', your search engine will search the app store for you. This can make it easier to find the specific app you are looking for, **before** you go to the store.



How to search for health apps

You can search sites from your country's national health service

In the UK, the National Health Service in England (NHS England) has set up a Health Apps Library website. It currently features some 200 apps that have been checked to make sure that they are relevant to people living in England, safe, and comply with data protection laws and trusted sources of information, such as NHS Choices.

The NHS Health Apps Library can be used by people from countries outside the UK (though the website is in English language only and some of the apps may be specific to the UK).

See <http://apps.nhs.uk/>



Example

NHS Choices' Health Apps Library currently has 14 diabetes apps that have been checked by relevant healthcare professionals. This is important because there are hundreds of diabetes apps, but only a small proportion that have been checked to see whether they are medically safe.

Using the library a person can narrow the search to find a diabetes app that:

- will help them track what they are eating
- works on Apple devices, for example iPad and iPhone
- is free



How to search for health apps

You can find out what people like you say about apps

Again, this comes down to 'who do you trust?' Reviews and ratings on app stores are largely unfiltered opinions from any individual wanting to give a review. This can be confusing, and overwhelming, and involve scrolling down to read through lots of reviews with contradictory views.

myhealthapps.net was created to help people identify useful apps from the thousands available, based on recommendations and reviews by patient and carer groups, as well as empowered consumers. The point is all the reviews on myhealthapps.net come from authenticated sources.

This means that people who understand the needs of others like themselves have selected and reviewed useful apps from the thousands available.



Example

There are 60 diabetes apps on myhealthapps.net.

- *What if you only want to use the app to log your diabetes-related activities?*

You can search for “diabetes logbook” in the search box on the website. Doing so reduces the number of eligible apps to 4

- *What if you can only use the app on an Android platform?*

You can now filter for Android. This reduces the number of eligible apps to 3

- *What if you do not want to be pay a lot for the app?*

You can now filter for cost (lowest to highest)



Where to download apps

You can find an app on an app 'store'

Type of device

- Apple devices, such as iPad and iPhone

Example source

iTunes
click on 'app store' on iPad

- Android phones

Google Play
Amazon

- Blackberry

BlackBerry App World

- Windows phone

Windows phone

- Other phone types

Mobile manufacturer sites



Android



Apple



Blackberry



Windows

Contents

Categories and search engines

Watch out

Sites tend to have categories like medical, health and fitness. There may also be smaller categories within each of these to help with searches. Alternatively, you can click on a search box within the site.

Description

Usually the developer has written this themselves. Is it accurate? Is it clear? Is it misleading? Is it full of technical jargon?

Screenshots

Screenshots are a great way of showing what an app does. By looking at the screenshots do you have a clear idea of how this app could help you?

Ratings and reviews

Typically there will be an overall rating which averages the combined opinion of all reviewers, for example, from 1-5 stars. There will also be a string of personal opinions on the app, but these can be long to scroll through, confusing or contradictory.

WHAT

Use this section to find out:

- What do you need to know about an app?
- What do you need a health app to do?
- What should you watch out for?



With so many health apps available, varying greatly in quality and usefulness, it is important to make an informed choice. There are 6 steps to consider:

Checklist

- ✓ **Step 1:**
What does the app do?
- ✓ **Step 2:**
Does the app work?
- ✓ **Step 3:**
Will it work where I need it?
- ✓ **Step 4:**
What does it *really* cost?
- ✓ **Step 5:**
Do I trust the people who created it?
- ✓ **Step 6:**
Can I trust this app with my data and privacy?

On the next few pages
you will find out ways to
answer these questions

What do you need to know about an app?

A developer can make all sorts of claims for their app when describing it on an app site or store.

Step 1: What does the app do?

Am I clear about what it is supposed to do?

Some things to look out for:

- Is there a clear listing of the app's functions?
- Are there some helpful screenshots which give an idea of what the app does, and how it works?
- Is there a link through to the developer's own site for more information?
- Is there a way to contact the developer for more information and feedback?



Self-monitoring



Information



Trackers



Improving
Communications

Who is it aimed at?

Are you sure that this app is aimed at your needs, or the needs of the person you are looking after?



Support to deal with symptoms/disabilities



Reminders



Allows networking with people like me / Family / Friends

What do you need to know about an app?

Step 2: Does the app work?

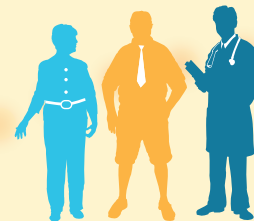
How do I know it will do what it promises?

For example, is it recommended and reviewed by a trusted source, medical authority or relevant patient group or by your peers or someone you trust?

Will it work on my phone or other device? Do I have the right software to make it work?

Always check that it will work on your device before downloading it. Unfortunately this can get quite technical. For example, you may find that it will work on your Android phone, but not using the version of software your phone uses.

Most app stores will usually only display apps that should work on your device. But be aware that if you are using an additional tool (eg a fitness monitoring wristband) that links to the app you may need to check that this will synchronise with your particular device (smartphone, tablet etc).



Step 3: Will it work where I need it?

Is it available in the language(s) I need?

Although most apps use major languages like English, some health apps have been created in multiple languages, including less common language groups such as Icelandic and Maltese. So you should be able to find a version in the language you are most comfortable with.

Do I always need to have a wired or wireless connection to the internet for the app to work?

Some apps only really work fully when connected to the internet, others work fine if you are 'offline'. Decide which works best for you.

Is the help given by the app relevant for the country I am in?

The content of some apps may only be relevant or usable in specific countries. Sometimes, this may not be obvious until you start using it. For example, different countries may use diverse weight and liquid measures, and treatment recommendations will often be defined for each country. So check this out first before downloading.

What do you need to know about an app?

Step 4: What does it *really* cost?

Is it really free?

Developers and their funders have to make money to finance health apps. If they are not charging you for the app, how are they making money? This might be by advertising, or by selling app users' data to advertisers or brokers (see Step 6). Again, this comes back to 'do you trust the source?'

Are there any hidden costs?

A common way for developers to fund apps is by giving basic functions for 'free' and then charge for more useful functions.

Is it free for a named time period?

For example, are you happy to pay in future for any updates?

Do I have to put up with adverts?

You may not know this until you start using it, or the number of adverts may build up over time.



What do you need to know about an app?

Step 5: Do I trust the people who created it?

Ask yourself the following questions

Does the developer:

- follow thorough processes to get their apps medically researched and approved?
- develop and test their apps with patients before launching?

Will the developer be around to support you in the months and years to come? For example, if you have to update the system that runs your phone or tablet device, will your app still work?

If the worst happened, do you have a way of knowing:

- who developed and funded the app?
- where to find them?
- how to contact them?



What do you need to know about an app?

Step 6: Can I trust this app with my data and privacy?

Is there an agreement/form for me to complete that protects my data and privacy?

If someone is going to share your medical data or your personal details, they need to obtain your permission. If you see a screen asking for your permission to share any data or personal information, only agree if you are clear and comfortable about what will happen to your data. For example, you may decide that you are willing to share anonymised data for research purposes, but not personal data.

If I get the app from a trusted source, can I trust the developers to keep my data secure and protect my privacy?

As most developers are individuals, or small companies, they may be hard to trace if they share your data or personal details without your permission, even if it can be proven that they have broken the law.

So, it may be worth thinking: 'What's the worst thing that could happen if someone saw this data?'

If the data is not sensitive, you may feel the risk of it being shared is simply the price of a 'free' app.

How to ensure my data are private?

Many apps suggest you sign into your app with an existing social media account you may have, like Facebook or Twitter. Although that can make it easier for you in managing passwords, it risks your privacy.

Although the medical data you have put into your health app might be anonymous, once you link it to a social media account, you may be giving away a lot more valuable information about yourself.



What do you need a health app to do?

Before you search for a health app, it is helpful to have a clear and specific idea about what you need it to do.



Example

If you want an app to help you find and track the number of calories you eat each day, you can focus your search by putting in specific terms, such as:

- calorie/calories
- tracker
- counter
- weight
- food nutrition
- exercise



Allows networking with other people like me / Family / Friends



Reminders



Support to deal with symptoms/disabilities



Self-monitoring



Trackers



Information

This checklist may help you to think about what you want from a specific app.

Overall, what do you want to achieve by using the health app?

Checklist

What do you need the app to do? For example,

- ✓ **General or specific information or tools to:**
 - help you manage your symptoms or condition?
- ✓ **Help with monitoring your symptoms or things that affect a medical condition to:**
 - help you track something: measures, calories, pollen or air pollution?
- ✓ **Give you reminders?**
- ✓ **Help you communicate well with doctors, nurses, or other carers?**
- ✓ **Help you connect with other people like you?**

What should you watch out for?

Most sites where you can review or download apps do not contain all the information you need to make an informed choice about whether the app is one you need and can trust.

Example

While most sites will offer a brief description of the app, this is often written by the developer and is more geared towards selling the app than independently reviewing it.

Ratings may tend to be about quantity of downloads rather than quality of use and experience.

Reviews vary in quality, and depend on scrolling through many individual reviews, rather than pooling expertise such as views from patient groups.

It is hard to find out who funds and medically advises on each app.

Recognising this need, sites like myhealthapps.net offer a more focused way to find out about an app.

In addition to myhealthapps.net other potential sites with useful information are:

- France-based DMD Santé ¹
- Germany-based Healthon ²
- USA-based iMedicalApps ³

1 <http://www.dmd-sante.com>

2 <http://www.healthon.de>

3 <http://www.imedicalapps.com>



Example of the details that myhealthapps.net provides to help you find the information you need

Tyze is a personal network with a health and care emphasis featured on myhealthapps.net.

What type of device does it work on?

(iPad, iPhone)

Which languages?

English/Spanish

How much does it cost?

Free

Which countries can I use it?

Any language in which the user is familiar with English or Spanish

Who developed it?

Tyze Personal Networks Ltd, Canada

Who funded it?

The technical developer

Who gave medical advice?

The PLAN Institute for Caring Citizenship

What does it do?

A personal network with a health and care emphasis. Allows the user to access the 'Tyze' online private community, which is oriented around the user's own family, friends, and healthcare professionals

What do the experts say about this app?

Reviews by Alzheimer Society of British Columbia, Canada; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), USA

What should you watch out for?

Is the app safe?

A minute proportion of health apps have been medically checked by a recognised authority. Ask yourself what the risk is with the app. For example, you may feel that:

- △ the risk is low - if it could mistake the number of calories in a chicken breast
- △ the risk is high - if it might stop you from going to see a doctor for a diagnosis
- △ the risk is very high - if the app is linked to a medical device that measures something critical like your blood pressure or blood sugar levels



What



18th EHFG

Bad Hofgastein Austria

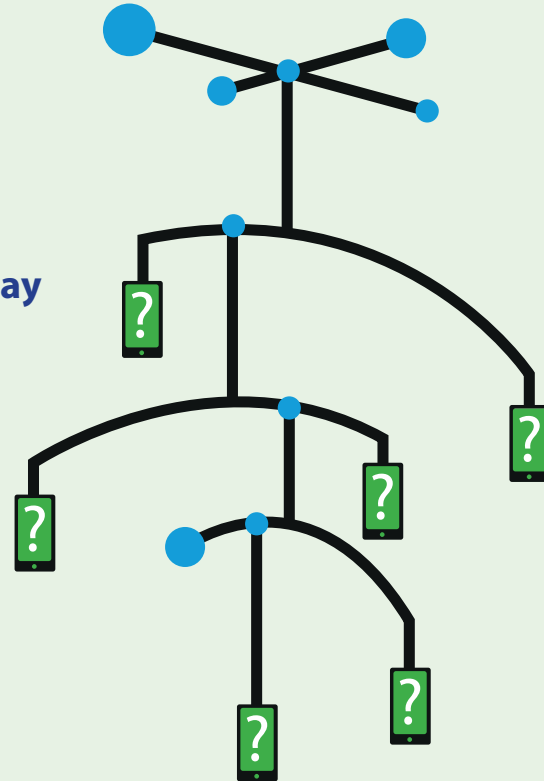


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HOW

Use this section to find out:

- How to download a health app
- How to update an app
- How to build the app into day-to-day health routines



How to download a health app

Before you can start downloading a health app you must have a device that can run apps such as a smartphone, iPad or other tablets, Mac PC, Windows PC and laptops. There is no universal definition of what is a smartphone, but today a typical smartphone will let you access the internet, send emails, and run apps.

There are 3 ways to download an app:

- 1. Direct from an app store**
- 2. From a web browser**
- 3. via Facebook**

For guidance on:

- **where to find an app, see the WHERE section**
- **what to look for in an app, see the WHAT section**

How to download a health app

1. Direct from an app store

Go to the relevant store for your phone, or other device. (See the WHERE section for different examples of app stores).

When you have searched the store, once you have set up an account and password, it is quite easy to download an app.

Remember that many apps are free. If you pay for an app, or for upgrading or extending an app, typically you will be sent a receipt.



Apple



Android



Blackberry



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How to download a health app

2. From a web browser

- **From developer websites**

You can use a standard search engine to find potentially useful apps, and the site of the developer. This has the advantage that the developer can show you more detail than on an app store. However, in most cases you may still need to go to an app store once you decide to download it to your device.



Windows



Browser

- **From specialist sites**

If you search for patient groups relevant to your needs, they are increasingly involved in creating and reviewing apps. There are some specialist review sites. A list can be found in the WHAT section of this toolkit.



Bones and Muscles



Breathing and Lungs



Heart, Circulation
and Blood



Support for Senses,
Mobility and Learning

How to download a health app

3. From social media, including Facebook

Social media sites are a good way of bringing together people with similar health needs. So they can be a source for relevant app recommendations and links to app stores where you can download apps. Health apps are also developed specifically for social media sites like Facebook.

For example, the organisation Dying Matters has a Facebook page where people can share lists of things they want to do during their life.

<https://www.facebook.com/DyingMatters>



- **Remember that social media ARE social**

Using social media is about sharing personal information.

Only use an app on a social media site if you are happy for others to see your information.

When any app suggests you join it through your social media account, such as Facebook or Twitter, think carefully as this may put your privacy at risk.



How to update a health app

No app is perfect, and no app is designed to last forever.

Some apps are updated regularly, for example, when the software of a specific phone or device is upgraded.

How you are notified that an update is waiting depends on your device. You usually have the choice to update a batch of apps at the same time, or think about which apps you do not want to update.

When you know that an update is ready, you may want to go back to the app store and check any recent reviews of the apps to see if it is worth updating.



Should I update my health app or not?

Pros

Medical guidelines and information can date quickly.

- An app upgrade may help keep you updated more quickly about developments relating to your condition
- It may work better or offer improved content and functions

Cons

When an app is updated, some people will find that it may:

- no longer work on their phone or other device
- freeze
- work less well than the previous version

Sometimes you may lose content you have been putting in regularly over a long period of time.

How to build the app into day-to-day health routines

A lot depends on:

- what the app does
- how you want to use it

Different sorts of apps have different lifetimes

Once only

Apps designed to be used once or twice, for example:

- introductory information to a disease



Information

As needed

Apps designed to be used now and again, for example:

- reference guides
- toilet finders when travelling



Support to deal with symptoms/ disabilities

Regularly

Apps designed to be used from day to day, for example:

- diet, exercise or medication trackers
- treatment planners



Trackers

Example

Day in the life of a health app user

- 09.00 Uses medication reminder to take and track morning pills
- 10.00 Uses app to record asthma peak flow
- 12.00 Uses calorie checker to find out and record the calories in today's lunch
- 14.00 Checks app for latest news on their medical condition
- 16.00 Updates their daily mood diary to see patterns about what can affect their emotions
- 19.00 Browses app for exercises they can carry out while watching TV
- 20.00 Uses app to plan questions to ask at their next meeting with their doctor

What is the difference between apps and websites?

As most websites are now designed to work on mobile phones, iPads, tablets and other mobile devices, the distinction between website and app content is becoming less important. Some apps link you to a website, equally some websites will link you to an app for a specific purpose. An app is just another type of tool to help you look after yourself or someone you care for.

But apps can be used offline, when no internet is available.



Android



Apple



Browser



VERÓNICA RUBIO FRANCO WITH HER
DAUGHTER MONICA ROMAN RUBIO
Verónica had gestational diabetes
and now has type 2 diabetes

DAWN2™
DIABETES ATTITUDES WISHES & NEEDS

how can we change what we do not understand?

We can start by listening to families like Verónica's. A study of more than 15,000 people across 17 countries, DAWN2™ helps us understand the attitudes, wishes and needs of people with diabetes and their families.

Learn more about DAWN2™ at dawnstudy.com

Follow us on



**changing
diabetes®**



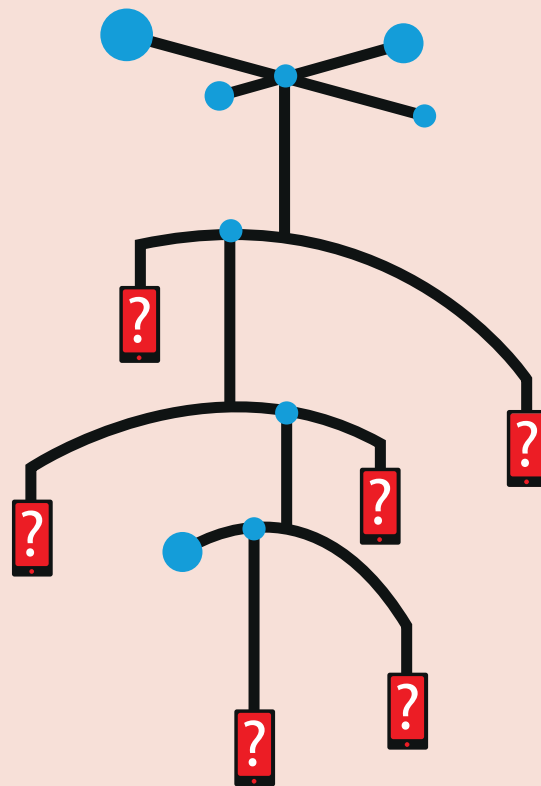
Changing Diabetes® and the Dawn2 logo are registered trademarks of Novo Nordisk A/S

RESOURCES

Use this section to find out:

- Useful links
- Troubleshooting
- What to do when things go wrong

There are many resources on the internet, and even in libraries and bookshops that can help you become more confident about using apps on the specific phone, tablet or iPad you use.





Seek out your patient/carer/consumer group

Patient, carer and consumer groups worldwide are becoming more confident about reviewing and even creating apps.

If you are not already a member of the relevant patient or carer group for a specific medical need in your country, search for their website.

You can find information about which of these groups are interested in health apps by looking at the reviews on myhealthapps.net. A broad list of relevant groups is available here:

<http://myhealthapps.net/reviewers>



See if your national health service reviews apps

Check out sources that show that apps have been medically approved, for example, by:

- CE marking, which means the app conforms with EU regulations that govern medical devices
- US Food and Drug Administration
- UK National Health Service

Some useful links:

Australia <http://www.tga.gov.au/industry/devices-software-mobile-apps.htm#.U3M-ZtxN1uY>

UK <http://apps.nhs.uk/>
<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/Howweregulate/Devices/Software/index.htm>

USA <http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/ConnectedHealth/MobileMedicalApplications/default.htm>



NHS choices health apps library



Check out independent sites that review health apps

Myhealthapps.net is an example of a site that can help you make a more informed choice about apps, because:

- all the apps on the site are those recommended and reviewed by relevant patient and carer groups
- the rating system is based on factors identified by patient groups as the most important, such as that it helps you manage your disease or condition
- the descriptions make clear who created, funded, and medically reviewed the app, and what it does

Other independent reviewers include:

- **DMD Santé** • **Happtique** • **iMedical Apps**

Troubleshooting

Apps are technically complex. There are many reasons why apps can fail to work properly on your device. This section walks you through some of the more common pitfalls and some tips on how to minimise them.

CONTENT

For example:

- The content is irrelevant
- The content is wrong
- The content is wrong for my country

Developers need feedback from users to correct and improve the content of their apps. Some make this easy. Other developers can be hard to track down.

You can always point out the mistakes on the review page at the app store, but your comment may be one of hundreds.

Usually, the more familiar you become with reading how developers describe the apps in the store, the better you get at spotting what you need from apps.



DATA AND PRIVACY

- I'm worried that my personal information is being shared
- I'm worried that my medical data is being used



As mentioned throughout this toolkit, if you are worried about the possibility of your medical data being shared, even anonymously, the best rule is: think very carefully before using a health app.

Some developers do post their privacy policies. These can be long and complex. Watch out for clauses about the developer being able to change the privacy rules.

The only real protection is to read all the 'small print' conditions you can find relating to the app and the developer. If you do not understand something, you may want to avoid using the app.

Troubleshooting

TECHNICAL

For example:

- The app does not work on my phone, tablet or other device
- The app appears to have lots of technical bugs
- The app was working and then it stopped
- The app was working well, but got worse when I updated it



Many people run into technical problems at some point. This is not surprising as there are many different types of phones, tablets and other devices, and diverse software to make them work.

One of the most common scenarios is when an app prompts you to update it. Sometimes, it can work less well in the 'improved version' or stop working altogether. If you check out recent comments at the app store where you got the app, this may give you a warning that there may be a specific problem when updating on your device.

Very few app developers have the time to offer technical support to people who buy their apps, but they do need to know about any 'bugs' and technical issues so that they can update their apps.

What to do when things go wrong

If you need more information or guidance on protecting your data, or seeking redress if your data has been shared or used without your consent, contact your national regulator.

Some examples:

EU

European Data Protection Supervisor

<https://secure.edps.europa.eu/EDPSWEB/edps/lang/en/EDPS>

- An explanation of the role and contact details of the data protection authorities in each of the 28 Member States can be found here:

<https://secure.edps.europa.eu/EDPSWEB/edps/lang/en/EDPS/Dataprotection/Glossary/pid/74>

US

Federal Trade Commission

<http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/>



About PatientView and myhealthapps.net

PatientView was founded in 2000 out of a belief that the views of patients should be considered in all important healthcare decisions, whether a new healthcare product or a government change to a healthcare system. A UK-based research, publishing and consultancy group, it now has the capacity to reach out to 120,000 patient organisations worldwide, covering over 1,000 specialties.

PatientView launched the myhealthapps.net website in November 2013 to provide an independent portal for health apps reviewed and recommended by patient groups and empowered consumers. We gratefully acknowledge and would like to thank the many patients' organisations around the world which have contributed reviews of health and wellbeing apps to myhealthapps.net. A full list of current reviewers can be found on <http://myhealthapps.net/reviewers>.

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