

Ford Innovations Help Diabetic Drivers

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Researchers at Ford have developed a series of in-car health and wellness innovations aimed at monitoring people with chronic illnesses or medical disorders so they can manage their condition while on the go.

Among the health & wellness apps and services is one for glucose monitoring. http://media.ford.com/images/10031/health_wellness.pdf

Working with Medtronic, a leading manufacturer of glucose monitoring devices, Ford researchers have developed a prototype system which allows Ford SYNC to connect via Bluetooth to a Medtronic continuous glucose monitoring device and share glucose levels and trends through audio and a center stack display that provides secondary alerts if levels are too low.



Ford innovations bring 'in car' health & wellness apps
Credits: Ford

Ford and WellDoc, a recognized leader in the emerging field of mHealth integrated services, have joined forces to integrate in-car accessibility to WellDoc's comprehensive, cloud-based, solutions for those with diabetes through SYNC services. Using voice commands, SYNC users can access and update their WellDoc profile to receive real-time patient coaching, behavioral education and specific support based on their historic and current disease information.

For people with diabetes and their care-givers, constant knowledge and control of glucose levels is critical to avoiding hypoglycemia or low glucose, which can cause confusion, lightheadedness, blurry vision and a host of other symptoms that could be dangerous while driving.

How did Ford get to this point? Gary Strumolo, global manager of health, wellness, interiors and infotainment for Ford research explains: "We were interested early in our development which started with Edsel Ford, whom you may know is on our board of directors. He's part of the Ford family and his son is diabetic."

"He put us in contact with Medtronic who at the time were developing the continuous glucose monitor... so it started there and we were also working on Sync and its connectivity system and we thought it would be a natural to try to hook that device because it could have Bluetooth in the car and we'd have a way to gain access to that information without taking your eyes off the road and your hands off the wheel. That was the genesis of it."

In short, it's innovation that has the potential to save lives. Ford is also working on similar services that can alert people with asthma to index levels for pollen and they're developing a car seat that monitors the driver's heartbeat using seat-sensor technology... That's still under development.