



Technology is Changing the Way We Live, and Stay Well

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By Deborah Hirsch

There's a quiet revolution going on and it's in your doctor's office. And the surgical suite. And probably in your gym. You might even be part of it yourself.

It's technology, and it's taking over medicine. From devices that can monitor your vital signs and blood glucose from a distance, to watches that can tell your heart rate after running a marathon, to doctors who can stay in touch over smartphones and tablets with kidney patients after dialysis to even just staying out of the [hospital](#), technology is changing the way we live.

And those sports gadgets? They even have a name: "quantified self movement."

As Donald Jones, vice president of business development at QUALCOMM, Inc. writes, the healthcare industry is moving from a "sick care system" to a "health improvement system," and mobile health (mHealth) services are a big part of it. Equipped with new devices and services, consumers are taking charge of their own health by seeking solutions that allow them to track their fitness and manage chronic disease therapy and overall wellness.

Medicaid patients with diabetes using [WellDoc](#)'s diabetes management tool cut their ER visits in half. WellDoc is the developer of a technology-based solution, designed to help people with chronic diseases better manage their conditions remotely, one of the thousands of companies that are benefiting from this new focus on wellness, and the technology to promote it.

Jones writes that one new opportunity to use technology to make us healthier is "the ability for wireless devices to passively collect data and update sensors (based on user consent), reducing the burden on the user and improving data accuracy."

He noted that connected health devices such as those sports gadgets allow relevant health information to be pushed to the consumer quickly.

Location-based services are another example, according to Jones. GPS capabilities are already used in some fitness devices by allowing the user to track exercise routes and compare results with others. "The powerful computing processors in devices, along with ubiquitous high-speed networks, will allow cutting-edge technologies such as augmented reality to identify nutritional content in food, identify pills and perform other functions that combine real-world imagery with server-side meta data," Jones wrote. "The opportunities for wireless technologies to improve health and wellness abound."

Telemonitoring is even allowing patients with high blood pressure who get support from a pharmacist to actually lower their blood pressure with no change in medication or anything else – just in having someone monitor and advise them.