

Community Comment May 8th, 2017

By Jon Sapper

Exercise Monitoring Gadget

Boy, it sure was nice to see the sun last week. After work one evening, I put on my workout clothes and took a jog down the hill from my house, around a few blocks and started back up. It didn't take long to retreat to a slow shuffle. Getting back into the workout routine after months of miserable weather and too much time on the couch showed me how out of shape I really am. I complained to my wife. She said, "Why don't you get a fitbit?"

I said, "I know I'm throwing a bit of a fit, but what is a fitbit?" She explained it's this narrow band looking device that you wear around your wrist. It measures how many steps you take, monitors your heart rate, calories you burn based on your level of activity, calories consumed (if you enter in what you eat and portions honestly), how well you sleep, etc.

My immediate reaction was, "This sounds great, I'll get one." Then I thought a little more about it. Do I really want to look at my wrist and see that I just gained ten ounces because I had a bowl of ice cream? I could cheat and only enter in that I had a ½ cup of ice cream, but I've never eaten that little at one sitting in my life. Do I want this thing telling me that today I've burned 900 calories by running around and consumed 2000 calories with dinner and my bedtime snack still to go? This Fitbit also allows you to put in your goals such as... I want to walk 15,000 steps each day. Do I then want to look at my wrist at 8 in the evening and it shows I've only walked 3,000 steps? I wonder if this wonderful device can automatically make counseling appointments for the depression I feel after looking at it all day.

It can also tell when I go to bed, how long I lie there staring at the ceiling unable to go to sleep and how many times I wake up. I only hope it doesn't know what I need to do when I wake up in the middle of the night. And then in the morning, it can flash a message to me letting me know that I had a miserable night of sleeping. Fantastic. As if I couldn't have come to the same conclusion on my own.

One of the other features is an organic (certainly) light emitting diode that measures current activity data and reports it out in a full profile report for just me. Wonderful. I can get a complete report of how active I am, how much I've eaten, net calories gained after subtracting calories burned from exercising and a second reminder of how miserable of a sleep I got the night before.

I can review this report every night while I'm sitting on the couch eating my bowl of ice cream, just before I go to bed.

I hope I don't get this thing for a birthday present.

This has been Jon Sapper for Community Comment.