What to look for when choosing tools to manage diabetes

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For individuals with diabetes

It can be difficult to choose tools to help manage diabetes — whether apps, social media, or websites. The four requirements below are recommended by healthcare personnel as the most important:

Easy to Use & Useful

Does it* have functions and functionalities to help with your diabetes needs?

Health Effect

Does it help the user to gain health-related effects, i.e., maintain or improve the health of users?

Trusted Information

Does it provide valid information? Is it from a reliable source?

Safe & Secure

Does it fulfil security and privacy regulations e.g., access, protection, and use of personal information?

*it - refers to either a diabetes app, website, or social media platform

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Easy to Use & Useful

Includes:

• Usability
Can the functions and features be used easily?

• Acceptability
Are you willing to use it?

• Feasibility (Practical)
Can it be used the way it was intended to be used and for the purpose it was intended for?

• Tailorability
Are the functions and features adaptable to each individual's needs?

• Visual representation
Can it illustrate information & data in an easy and meaningful way?

• Technology engagement
How often and in which manner is it used?

• Remote monitoring
Can it transmit data to others for the purpose of monitoring?

• Data accessibility
Can it allow access to information & data on one device from another device or platform?

• Automated data recording
Can it automatically capture and/or register data, including via connected sensors and wearables?

Trusted Information

Refers to trustworthiness and validity of information provided by a diabetes app, website, or social media platform. This could be related to the reliability of the source i.e., person, organization, or institution responsible for its development.

Health Effect

Includes:

• Clinical impact
Can its use be associated with change in, or maintenance of diabetes health measures such as glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c)?

• Behavioral impact
Can its use be associated with change in, or maintenance of successful diabetes self-management behaviors like regular exercise & healthy diet?

• Cognitive impact
Can its use be associated with change in, or maintenance of diabetes self-management knowledge, understanding, and/or confidence e.g., recognizing hypoglycemia symptoms and knowing what to do?

Safe & Secure

Refers to how a digital self-management tool or service fulfils security and privacy regulations with regards to e.g., access, protection, and use of personal information.

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