



How Effective are Activity Trackers?



Activity trackers, such as Fitbit, Fuelband, and Jawbone, allow users to monitor their health and fitness data with ease, thanks to wireless technology. Increasing use of these wearables has generated interest from researchers who are keen to assess if such devices are indeed effective in helping people lead healthier lives.

See Also: [Fitbits Monitor Symptoms in Transplant Patients](#)

A new report published in the journal *Significance* notes that the traditional randomised trial designs used in health and medicine may not be applicable to mobile health. Hence, use of “micro-randomised trials” as an alternative is suggested by authors of the report.

In micro-randomised trials, participants are randomly assigned a treatment from the set of possible treatment actions at several times throughout the day. Therefore, each participant may be randomised hundreds or thousands of times over the course of a study, according to Susan Murphy, PhD, senior author of the journal report.

See Also: [Broadcasting Biology: Pros and Cons of Wearable Technology](#)

“These trials will provide evidence regarding in which real-time settings wearable devices should provide treatments to help you and me, and in which settings these treatments will only aggravate us,” explains Dr. Murphy, H.E. Robbins Distinguished University Professor of Statistics, professor of psychiatry, and research professor, Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

Source: [Wiley](#)

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