

Fitbit, Dexcom will provide self-management tool for glucose level monitoring

September 10 2017, by Nancy Owano



(Tech Xplore)—Self-care among people with diabetes is important along with self-monitoring of blood glucose levels. Yet medical problems can trouble some people if they do not manage their diabetes aggressively

enough and do not measure their blood glucose levels frequently enough.

A WHO Fact Sheet pins the number of people with [diabetes](#) as having risen from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. "In 2015, an estimated 1.6 million deaths were directly caused by diabetes."

"More than 422 million people around the world have diabetes, a fraction of whom are presumed to be using a wearable for tracking their [blood glucose](#) levels," said Sarah Buhr in *TechCrunch*.

Engineers and designers working with wearables can help support the need for self-management. Their devices can ease the task for people who need to track their [blood glucose levels](#).

An encouraging step was in the news this month, with the announcement of [Fitbit](#) stepping into the diabetes management space in collaboration with Dexcom. The result is an information tool to proactively manage diabetes. The new smartwatch from Fitbit will help people with [diabetes](#) monitor glucose levels. You pair the watch with a Dexcom G5 Mobile sensor and you see results on the Ionic watch display.

There will be a transfer of up-to-date glucose level data to the Ionic smartwatch; the latter is due out from Fitbit in October. This collaborative tie-in though will be seen in 2018.

Amanda Pedersen, *Medical Device and Diagnostic Industry*: "The [two](#) California companies are targeting availability as soon as possible in 2018."

Sarah Buhr in *TechCrunch* spelled out what you can expect to see:

"Starting in 2018, the Fitbit Ionic will show users data from the Dexcom G5 Mobile sensor, which is worn just under the skin and can show vitals

every 5 minutes. This means you will have to insert the \$900 sensor first."

Tyler Lee in *Ubergizmo* wrote about the sensor, saying "the G5 Mobile sensor is a sensor worn just under the skin that will be able to show the wearer's vitals every 5 minutes, thus providing users with a constant [method](#) of monitoring their glucose levels." Lee too noted this would be contingent on the person buying the sensor, at \$900.

Dexcom highlights "Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM)" with emphasis on *continuous*. CGM can be described as a glycemic management system.

Rather than just looking at numbers (it is of limited use to just see a number if you have no idea where the number is headed, up or down), the patient gets views of highs and lows. "The Dexcom G5 Mobile Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) System is FDA-approved to help minimize the guesswork that comes from making decisions based solely on a number from a blood glucose meter reading," said the company.

CGM information, with the Fitbit link-up, will be viewable on a Fitbit Ionic.

ZDNet said, "If all goes well, Fitbit could become a key health [care](#) player in the enterprise and push patients toward better outcomes."

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