

Physical Activity - Wearables

We've come a long way from pedometers / stepcounters that fit on our waist bands and fall off when we start exercising. Lucky for us massive steps have been made with newer technology allowing us to access information that helps us track what we are doing. This is great news as science tells us that monitoring our behaviours is a really important way to keep on track with our health plans.

We all know we need to be active, "but how much?" and "what type is best?" "is walking enough?", "what about cycling?", "some say gardening but is that really an activity?" "I already feel really active chasing my kids around isn't that enough?" We all know sleep is important but how much? and does the quality of our sleep count?

Thankfully there are now a variety of wearable devices that usually come in the form of wrist bands (as watches) that can now give us this information, giving us confidence that our plans are paying off and we are using our time wisely.

It is important to know that any wearable is simply a tracker, sounds obvious but many people buy a wearable and then don't really use it. So we would suggest that if you are going to get a wearable device try and match it to a plan that you have formulated. At MoreLife we talk about **SMART** goals and a wearable device helps us to monitor our plans giving us measurement of our goals, but we still need to think about having **SMART** goals and a plan to achieve those goals. The second and important benefit of wearables is that they will give you feedback, so it's important to think about how you will use this information as part of your plans.

Thinking about your plans, do you want to be more active or to get more out of your activity? If you just need to get more active then most trackers give us that information easily and cheaply, but if we want to get more out of our activity time then smart watches probably help better.

So once you have created some **SMART** goals then it's a good idea to have a look at the different wearables available; we've provided a bit of a summary of the types, as well as the features and benefits of the different types available.



Basic Fitness Trackers

- **Price**
 - o Starting from £10, ranging up to £60-70 for a premium model
 - o Cheap and cheerful models are a good way to test if you want to wear something on your wrist all the time
- **Normal functions**
 - o Ability to tell the time
 - o Step counter
 - o Calorie estimations
 - o Sleep tracking
- **Notes**
 - o Look out for devices which track GPS or heart rate, as these are often more premium features
 - o Many basic fitness trackers sync with your smartphone, so you can use an app to log all your activity

Advanced Fitness Trackers



- **Price**
 - o Usually around the £70+ mark, up to £200
- **Normal functions**
 - o All of the functions of “Basic Fitness Trackers”
 - o GPS
 - o Heart Rate Monitor
 - o Smartphone App
- **Notes**
 - o The more expensive Fitness Trackers may be very similar to Smartwatches – which can usually do more
 - o You can find specialist Fitness Trackers for specific sports
 - o You can find a number of these which look like real watches

Smartwatches



- **Price**
 - o Most are above £100, with more luxurious models being over £500
- **Normal functions**
 - o All of the functions of “Basic Fitness Trackers”
 - o Similar functions to “Advanced Fitness Trackers”
 - o Apps
- **Notes**
 - o Usually from the same brands that you would buy your Smartphone from
 - o There is a lot of crossover in this category, and some “Smartwatches” are actually Fitness Trackers
 - o Like “Advanced Fitness Trackers” these often look similar to real watches