

## Do m-health smartphone interventions help adolescents and adults who are overweight or obese?

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**Clinical Question** Are integrated mobile health (m-health) smartphone applications safe and effective for improving health behaviours for adolescents and adults that are overweight or obese?

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**Bottom Line** A smartphone app versus no or minimal intervention may reduce BMI and body weight in the short to medium term (up to six months) but this reduction does not seem to still be evident at 12 months. There is currently no evidence to suggest smart phone apps change physical activity levels, quality of life or dietary behaviours. Clinicians and practitioners should approach the implementation of smartphone apps carefully, considering their potential benefits, limitations, and the rapidly evolving research landscape in this area.

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**Caveat** The quality of evidence for many of the outcomes was downgraded due to small numbers of studies with low numbers of participants. This means the current evidence base is limited. Adverse events were only reported narratively in two studies, neither of which recorded any serious events.

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**Context** Obesity is a risk factor for various diseases, and its incidence has tripled worldwide since 1975. In addition to potentially being at risk for adverse health outcomes, people who are overweight or obese are often stigmatised. Behaviour change interventions are increasingly delivered as mobile m-health interventions, using smartphone apps and wearables.

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**Cochrane Systematic Review** Metzendorf M-I, Wieland LS, Richter B. Mobile health (m-health) smartphone interventions for adolescents and adults with overweight or obesity. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2024, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD013591. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD013591.pub2. This review contains 18 trials with a total of 2,703 participants.

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**Pearls No. 741, February 2024, written by Assoc Professor Vanessa MB Jordan.**

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Systematic review link:

<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD013591.pub2/full>