

# Technology & Fitness

Using your phone to help you achieve your health and fitness goals.

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Driving to work in the morning always means turning on the AM radio station to listen to the traffic report. One recent morning while I was listening and waiting to learn just how long I would be sitting in the morning rush hour, I heard a report about a Northwestern University study that showed men had more success losing weight when using mobile apps to help them track their diet and exercise. The study followed men for a 12 month time period and discovered that men who used a mobile phone app and had a coach monitoring their intake and exercise lost nearly nine pounds on average over a year, while those who just wrote calories down on paper had no weight loss.

This reminded me of my fiancé who has been complaining about his weight. He himself has had spurts where he uses a mobile app to track his diet and exercise and, when he has been consistent for a month or more doing this, he has lost weight. Recently though, he has not been consistent with tracking his diet or his exercise (well actually he hasn't

been exercising, so nothing really to track there) and he has put some weight back on. I too have used an app sparingly to keep track and although I haven't seen a difference on the scale, I certainly made better decisions eating, such as avoiding unnecessary or bad snacks, and would be less likely to skip a workout if I knew I would miss out on logging it for that day.

With the new year, the most common resolution that people make centers around losing weight, eating healthier, and exercising more. If you share that resolution, it might be a good idea to check



out what mobile apps are available to you, or to get recommitted to one you may have used in the past. Here are 3 free apps that I would recommend to check out:

## MyNetDiary

- Available for Android and iPhone
- This app tracks your calorie and nutrition intake, as well as your exercise, to help you gain control of your intake. It charts and graphs trends and progress and is very easy to use as it has a bar code reader that allows you to just scan the bar-code on your packaged food. For food without a bar-code, you can search their food database.

## My Fitness Pal

- Available for Android and iPhone
- A lot like MyNetDiary, but home to a larger food database which makes logging meals fast and easy. It allows you to set a weight lose goal, track your meals to provide caloric and nutritional information, and log your exercise. You can also follow and be followed by friends who also use the app, creating a support system.

## DailyBurn

- Available for iPhone
- One neat aspect of this app is that it lets you view professionally-written wellness and exercise articles along with creating weight goals, and tracking workouts and weight. The only drawback is they charge you for add-ons, such as the bar-code scanner.

There is an unattributed quote that says "goals not written down are just wishes." Keeping track of our health and fitness goals and our progress towards those goals makes us accountable and keeps us focused.

Kimberly is the Head Women's Volleyball Coach at Chestnut Hill College, located in Philadelphia PA. She also coaches high school athletes who compete on travel volleyball teams. She has worked with numerous athletes of various ages and levels to help them achieve their maximum potential. When not helping and teaching others as a coach, she enjoys challenging herself in the gym and looks forward to a Java Jolt smoothie after a good work out!