

Wearable Health Tech Keeps Users Safe and Healthy

As Congress continues to promote value-based healthcare and put patients back in control of their health, the Connected Health Initiative urges Members to advance H.R. 6279, the Wearable Equipment Adoption and Reinvestment in Technology Act (WEAR IT Act). This bill would clarify that wearable health devices and associated software are eligible for reimbursement through flexible spending accounts (FSAs) and health savings accounts (HSAs). These devices have many uses in the detection, mitigation, treatment, and prevention of health conditions. HSAs and FSAs already generally cover wearable devices with single functions like electrocardiogram (EKG) monitors, pulse oximeters, and heart rate monitors. But last year, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) deemed two multi-function wearables eligible for FSA and HSA, and Congress must ensure it covers the full scope of wearable health technology. Multi-function wearables routinely catch critical and previously undetected conditions and even save American lives. These individual stories illustrate that the WEAR IT Act is long overdue.

Rachael Kabala of Boulder, Colorado, was an active and healthy woman who had been using Fitbits to track her health data for several years before she became pregnant. During her pregnancy, she noticed that her resting heart rate—generally a low 54 beats per minute on average—had begun to fluctuate and was averaging 58 beats per minute. After the birth of her child, she saw her heart rate drop back down to 53 beats per minute, but it didn't stop there. Her heart rate dropped to an average in the low 40s, and she began to feel her heart pounding. This was concerning enough that she checked her blood pressure, which was in the hypertension range. She went back to the hospital just two days after discharge following the birth of her child and received a diagnosis of postpartum preeclampsia. This life-threatening condition can lead to seizures, strokes, and organ damage when left untreated. Now, Rachael uses her Fitbit to continue tracking her heart rate and other measures to get a picture of her overall health.

Read more about Rachael's story here: [Fitbit helps diagnose post-partum preeclampsia, 2021](#)



"When the doctors started the tests, they asked me what my symptoms were. I was able to pull up my Fitbit data and show them the heart rate numbers and how it had been dipping down to the low 40s. With that information and some of their own tests, they were able to quickly and definitively say that I had postpartum preeclampsia." -**Rachel**

Preeclampsia can be a precursor to seizures, strokes, or organ damage. A lot of women have preeclampsia when they are pregnant and it is often a reason to induce labor early. But it can also happen in the first weeks after pregnancy.

