

Smartphones Could Aid Weight Loss

by [Matthew Kadey, MS, RD](#)



Most often we're told to spend less time on our smartphones, but researchers from Duke University have given us evidence that a **food-tracking mobile app** can be an effective tool for those who want to shed pounds without committing to a more time-consuming intensive diet program.

In their study, 105 overweight adults (DSR: Average BMI would be useful) were randomly assigned to one of three groups:

- **The first group** used the app to track what they ate every day for 3 months.
- **The second group** logged just their weight for a month, then added food tracking for the remaining 2 months.
- **The third group** used the app to record both their weight and their food intake for all 3 months. Participants were not instructed to follow a particular diet; they were simply given broad advice on healthy eating, with the second and third groups also receiving tailored emails and weekly nutrition lessons.

By the end of the study, participants in the first group had lost about 5 pounds, while those in the other two groups had dropped slightly more, about 6 pounds. Consistency was key: Among all participants, those who were most diligent about using the app to track their consumption habits and weight each day shed the most pounds.

For those who are looking for a rather painless way to help them lose weight, using an app like MyFitnessPal (the one used in the study) could be a solution, but they will also need additional tools to boost effectiveness, such as tailored calorie targets.

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