



News Release

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Surgeon General Announces Winners of Healthy App Challenge

Washington, DC — Four mobile phone applications have been chosen as winners of the Healthy App Challenge launched by Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, MD to promote her vision for a healthy and fit nation.

The winning applications are: “Lose it!” In the category of fitness/ physical activity;” “GoodGuide” and “Fooducate” in the category of nutrition / healthy eating; and “Healthy Habits” in the category of integrative health. In addition, highlighting the high standard of entries received, two other apps were recommended for fitness/physical activity: Fit Friendly and MapMyFitness and two apps for children (and adults who are young at heart): Max’s Plate and Short Sequence: Kids’ Yoga Journey.

The apps were assessed against a range of criteria including innovativeness, usability, the ability to generate and download personal data, and whether they made the health-promoting activity fun. They also had to be available for free.

“I’ve been delighted with the response to this challenge. The winning apps will help many Americans to have fun while getting fit and healthy,” said Dr. Benjamin. “I’m excited to learn to use these apps and to discover how they will help me meet my health goals.”

“The Surgeon General’s Healthy App Challenge highlights the ability of innovative new technologies to provide health information tailored to the needs of the user, and empower the general public to regularly engage in, and enjoy, health-promoting behaviors,” said Dr. Farzad Mostashari, National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology co-sponsored the challenge.

The Surgeon General supports using new technologies to bring healthy lifestyle messages to the American people. She is involved in a number of consumer e-health initiatives led by HHS, including;

- Family Health Portrait – to help people understand and share their family health history;
- SmokefreeTXT – a free mobile phone-based tobacco cessation service for young adults;
- Text4Baby – a free mobile phone-based information services designed to promote maternal and child health; and
- Txt4Health – to tackle diabetes in Beacon Community Programs.

“I strongly believe in the importance of empowering individuals to make healthy choices. That’s one of four strategic directions of the National Prevention Strategy that aims to transform our healthcare system into one that rewards prevention. Readily accessible tools like social media and mobile apps can help people manage everything from dietary choices to physical activity, stress management and relaxation techniques,” said Dr. Benjamin.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE WINNING APPLICATIONS

Lose It! helps individuals achieve their nutrition and physical activity goals by setting daily calorie budgets that require users to record their food intake and physical activity. It also has a feature that allows users to invite their friends to view their logs on Facebook.

GoodGuide makes it easy for individuals to get the information they need about their food, personal care, and household products to help make healthy choices. It has a bar code scanner that allows users to scan products while they shop to get this information.

Fooducate helps you make healthy food choices. When shopping you can scan the product bar code for a quick read on the nutritional values and additional information such as nutrients and additives; the app can offer healthier alternatives and compare two products side-by-side.

Healthy Habits recognizes that good health is not just about staying active and eating well, but is also reliant on other factors, such as sleeping well and mental health. This application addresses health issues such as smoking, wearing sunscreen, and reducing stress by tracking the user’s success and goals.

All the winning and recommended apps are available for free download.

Please visit <http://sghealthyapps.challenge.gov> or <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/> for more details.

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