

A SMART START

TO FINDING NUTRITION AND HEALTH APPS

The tips below can help you make decisions before downloading nutrition and health apps.

What is the **S**ource of the app?

- ▶ Does the app have a website? If so, read the “about” section to learn more about the person or organization that created the app.
- ▶ Are there spelling or grammatical errors that indicate a lack of quality control?
- ▶ Does the information in the app contradict what other sources say? For example, does the app suggest safely losing more weight each week than other sources?

Does it **M**eet your needs?

- ▶ For example, if a food-tracking app is what you need, is the database of foods large enough to reflect the kinds of foods you eat?
- ▶ If recipes are provided, are they healthy (prepared with minimal fat, sugar and processed ingredients)? If you have food allergies or you are on a specific diet, do the recipes meet your needs? Do the recipes suit your cooking skills and taste preferences?
- ▶ Do the recipes or workouts require equipment or skills that you do not have or are unsure about?

What **A**ctions will you take?

- ▶ Does the app provide information that is easy to understand and use?
- ▶ Does the app connect you with other social networks via Twitter, Facebook, or other online message boards? These can create social support for the behaviors you want to change or improve.

What do the **R**eviews say?

- ▶ What do reputable nutritionists, dietitians or other health professionals say about the app? Visit the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics eatright.org/appreviews for registered dietitian reviews or iMedicalapps.com for physician reviews on medical and healthcare apps.
- ▶ Are there any online tech reviews that tell you how well the app works and how easy it is to use? Some reviews include screenshots or visuals that show what the app’s screens look like. Are the screens easy to read and understand?

Do you have the **T**ime?

- ▶ Is the app easy to use?
- ▶ If the app involves tracking what you eat or other health habits, will you use it regularly?