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Look for a health app that protects sensitive information

Health apps on your smartphone or smartwatch can help you track your health conditions, count calories, manage medications or predict ovulation. To do this, they often ask for sensitive personal information, such as your health history and medications you take.

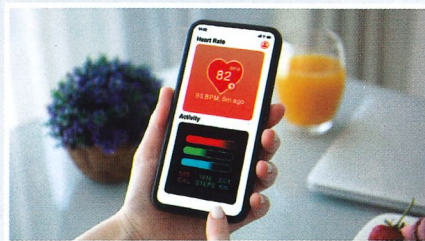
Some apps may use this information to target you with ads or they may sell your data to other companies. Unlike your doctor, these apps may not be covered by health privacy laws, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

Recently the Federal Trade Commission settled a complaint with makers of a fertility-tracking app, Flo, after it was discovered

that it shared users' health information with third parties, such as Facebook and Google, that provided marketing services to Flo, even though Flo promised users that it would protect their privacy.

When choosing a health app, the FTC recommends that you:

- **Compare health apps.** Is the app's privacy notice written in simple terms that explain clearly what information it



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collects from you and how it will be used?

- **Take control of your information.** Do app settings let you control the information the app can collect and share?
- **Keep your app updated.** Updates may include important privacy and security fixes.
- **Know the risks.** Determine whether you're comfortable with others having access to the health information you provide to the app if the app doesn't keep its privacy promises.

Report your concerns to the FTC at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov if you believe a health app isn't protecting your information as promised.