

# Short guide to choosing a reliable and 'caring' healthcare technology

Have you ever asked yourself these questions?

- Is this health app or medical device really good for me?
- What are the benefits? What are the drawbacks ?
- Does this technology respect my privacy?
- Does this technology affect the environment?

This guide is here to help you.

This guide is based on the **8 caring technology principles in healthcare**.

A caring technology should be:

- **good for you,**
- **useful for citizens, in general,**
- **serving society.**

With this guide, you can assess whether a technology is right for you.

We offer a series of **simple questions** to help you evaluate a health app or medical device.

## How does it work?

Step 1: Think about what you need.

Step 2: Evaluate a specific technology through a few simple questions.

Step 3: Decide whether or not you want to use that technology.



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## Step 1

### Think about what you need

First, take a moment to think about your needs. This will help you to better answer the questions about the technology. Let's give you some examples.

1

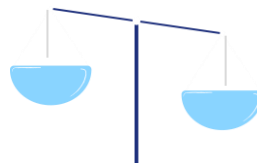
**What are my health goals?**

Examples: staying independent, monitoring a condition, preventing health issue.

2

**Did I ever have to make an important decision about my health?**

What considerations or information helped me to make that decision?



**Have I ever shared medical data with a doctor or a loved one?**

3

Why and how did I do it?



4

**What tools or technologies do I already use for my health?**

Examples: mobile app, medical device, digital journal.



5

**Which aspects of a technology are most important to me?**

Examples: ease of use, respect for my privacy, cost, compatibility, environmental impact.



6

**How important is it for me to know how my personal data are used?**



8

**How important is a technology's environmental impact to me?**

Examples: use of materials, energy use, recycling.



**Do I read reviews or tests before using a new technology?**

7



## Step 2

### Evaluate a specific technology

If you need to decide whether a technology is right for you, you can ask yourself the following questions.

How does it work?

1. Read the questions.
2. Answer with "yes", "no", or "partially".
3. Decide whether or not you want to use the technology.



#### Tips before starting : Where can you find information about a specific technology ?

Find answers to your questions:

- **Read the user manual:**  
Check whether it clearly explains how to use the technology.  
Also verify whether it complies with data protection laws (e.g. GDPR).
- **Look for labels or certifications:**  
For example, the CE mark indicates that the technology is safe and officially recognized.
- **Ask for other users' opinions:**  
Read online reviews or ask patient associations what they think about the technology.
- **Ask questions to the provider or manufacturer,** such as:  
Are my personal data protected?  
Is the technology compatible with my smartphone?
- **Search for tests or studies:**  
Check whether experts have tested or validated the technology.



1

**Does the technology meet my specific health needs?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Does the technology help maintain a good quality of life?
- Can the technology adapt to changes in my health status?
- Does the technology have a place in my treatment, alongside my healthcare providers?
- Does the technology support me in adopting healthy habits?

2

**2. Does the technology help me make decisions about my health?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Does the technology provide clear and up-to-date information on health topics?
- Does it offer useful and reliable information?

3

**Is the technology compatible with other technologies?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Can the technology transmit data to my electronic health record?
- Is it compatible with other apps or digital platforms that I already use?

4

**Do I receive clear information about the technology?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Are the benefits and drawbacks of the technology clearly explained (in plain language)?
- Can I easily understand why the technology gives certain recommendations rather than others?

5

**Am I free to accept or refuse the technology without pressure or negative consequences?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Partially

**Comments :**

**To help you answer:**

- Can I easily give or withdraw my consent?
- Do I clearly understand what I am agreeing to or refusing when I use the technology? For example: access to my data or how my information is used.

6

**Are my personal data protected, and is my privacy respected?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Partially

**Comments :**

**To help you answer:**

- Does the technology comply with data protection laws?
- Am I informed of any security breaches and their consequences?

7

**Can I access and share my medical data quickly and easily?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Partially

**Comments :**

**To help you answer:**

- Can I easily share my medical data with healthcare providers or loved ones, or can I get help to do so?
- Do I know who has access to my data?
- Can I change who I share my data with at any time?
- Do I know who is using my data and for what it's being used?

8

**Is the technology easy to use?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Partially

**Comments :**

**To help you answer:**

- Does the technology have features I want to use?
- Is support available, such as tutorial videos, to help me better understand and use the technology?
- Can I use the technology only when I really need it?

9

**Is the technology reasonably priced?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Does the price of the technology reflect the benefits it provides?
- Is the price based solely on its development and use, or also on other factors? (For example: reimbursement mechanisms or the use of personal data).

10

**Is the technology positively evaluated?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Has research shown that using the technology improves health?
- Is there an independent organization that verifies these results?

**Optional questions:** These questions cover additional aspects.  
You can answer them if you are interested.

11

**I am interested in supporting research.****Does the technology allow me to share data for research that helps improve people's health?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Can I easily and safely share my data for research?
- Can I easily find out which data I've shared and for what purpose?

12

**I am interested in helping and contributing to the development of technologies.****Can I give feedback when I use the technology?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Partially
**Comments :****To help you answer:**

- Will my feedback be taken into account?
- Can I participate in decisions to improve the technology?

13

**I am particularly concerned about making technologies accessible to everyone.**

**Is the technology designed to benefit all citizens, without exception?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

**Comments :**

**To help you answer:**

- Is the technology accessible and easy to use, including for people with specific needs or limited technical skills?
- Is the technology affordable and available to everyone, including the most vulnerable?

14

**I am particularly concerned about the environmental impact of technologies.**

**Is the technology environmentally friendly?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

**Comments :**

**To help you answer:**

- Is the technology recyclable? Can it be taken back at the end of its lifespan?
- Is the technology designed to save energy and last a long time, with options for repair or updates?



## Step 3

### Make a decision

Now that you've answered the questions, take a moment to reflect.

- **Does the technology meet your most important needs?**
- **Do you still have concerns or unanswered questions?**
- **Do the benefits of the technology outweigh the risks?**

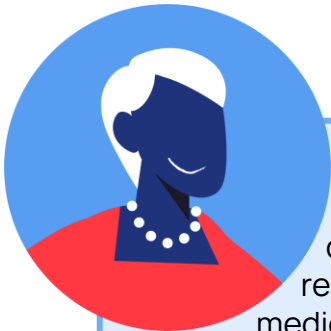
If the technology meets enough of your priorities, it could be a good fit.  
If still in doubt, seek more information or advice from a healthcare professional.

#### **Most important:**

Choose a technology that supports you, respects your priorities, and makes you feel confident using it.

### A concrete example

#### Meet Sophie



Sophie is 70 years old and has high blood pressure. Her doctor has asked her to monitor her blood pressure regularly and share the results. Sophie has never used a medical technology before. She uses a basic smartphone for calls and text messages but isn't comfortable with complex apps. What matters most to her: a simple-to-use solution, compatible with her phone, that respects her privacy.

#### **Technology description: The smart blood pressure monitor**

The connected blood pressure monitor is a medical device that automatically measures blood pressure. It sends the data via Bluetooth to a mobile app compatible with Android and iOS. The app displays simple graphs to track trends, sends reminders to take measurements, and allows results to be sent to a doctor or relative by email.

- **Price:** €90
- **Data protection:** The data are encrypted and the app is GDPR-compliant.
- **Instructions:** A clear user manual is included, and tutorial videos are available online.



## Response Summary: Sophie Evaluates the Technology

Main question	Answer	Comments
1. Does the technology meet my specific health needs?	Yes	The technology helps me monitor my blood pressure, which is essential for managing my hypertension. It fits well into my treatment plan. The reminders help me take my measurements regularly.
2. Does the technology help me make decisions about my health?	Partially	The simple graphs allow me to understand my blood pressure trends. It helps me to communicate more easily with my doctor. However, the technology doesn't give me any advice.
3. Is the technology compatible with other technologies?	Partially	The technology works with my Android smartphone and allows me to send data by email. However, it does not synchronize with my electronic medical record.
4. Do I receive clear information about the technology?	Yes	The instructions are clear and easy to read. Instructional videos are available if needed.
5. Am I free to accept or refuse the technology without pressure or negative consequences?	Yes	The app clearly explains what data are shared and allows me to change or withdraw my consent at any time.
6. Are my personal data protected, and is my privacy respected?	Yes	The technology complies with GDPR, and the data are encrypted. That reassures me.
7. Can I access and share my medical data quickly and easily?	Partially	I can share my results with my doctor, but only via email or PDF. The guidelines for sharing data are clear.
8. Is the technology easy to use?	Partially	Synching via Bluetooth was a bit complicated at first, but the tutorial videos helped me understand.

Response Summary: Sophie Evaluates the Technology

Main question	Answer	Comments
9. Is the technology reasonably priced?	Yes	€90 seems like a reasonable price for a connected medical device.
10. Is the technology positively evaluated?	Yes	The blood pressure monitor has CE certification, which guarantees its reliability and safety.
11. Does the technology allow me to share data for research that improves people's health?	No	I haven't seen any option for this. I might be able to share my data anonymously, but I'm not sure.
12. Can I give feedback when using the technology?	Partially	The app offers a space to leave reviews, but I don't know if my suggestions will actually be taken into account.
13. Is the technology designed to benefit all citizens, without exception?	Partially	I can use it easily, but others who aren't comfortable with technology might struggle. I also don't know whether it could be reimbursed or if there's an option to rent the device.
14. Is the technology environmentally friendly?	Partially	The device doesn't indicate whether it's recyclable, but the batteries are replaceable, which extends its lifespan.

Summary for Sophie

Positive points:

The blood pressure monitor meets her main needs (monitoring her blood pressure, sharing results with her doctor). The device is easy to use after watching the tutorial videos, respects her privacy, and is reasonably priced.

Negative or partial negative points:

Sophie had some initial difficulties with the Bluetooth setup. She would have liked more information about the environmental impact and the options for contributing to research.

**Conclusion:** Sofie can now decide whether or not to use the smart blood pressure monitor based on the information she already has.



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You can find this guide on the website: <https://www.yuza.be/post/8ctp-short-guide-citizens-patients>

Discover all the projects and tools supported by the Fund dr. Daniël De Coninck related to the 8 caring technology principles here: <https://www.caringtechnology.be/>