

Men's
Health



Top Apps, Tech Track Health

Fitness and health apps are nothing new, but they occupy an increasingly popular segment of the ever-expanding app markets for mobile devices. Likewise, the emerging wearable tech world has evolved quickly since Fitbit brought the concept into the mainstream with its first fitness tracker in 2009.

But navigating the virtual and real stores for apps and devices can be an exercise in itself. Like many health regimens begun with vigorous enthusiasm, the search often ends in disappointment and dejection leaving expense and an array of discarded apps in its wake.

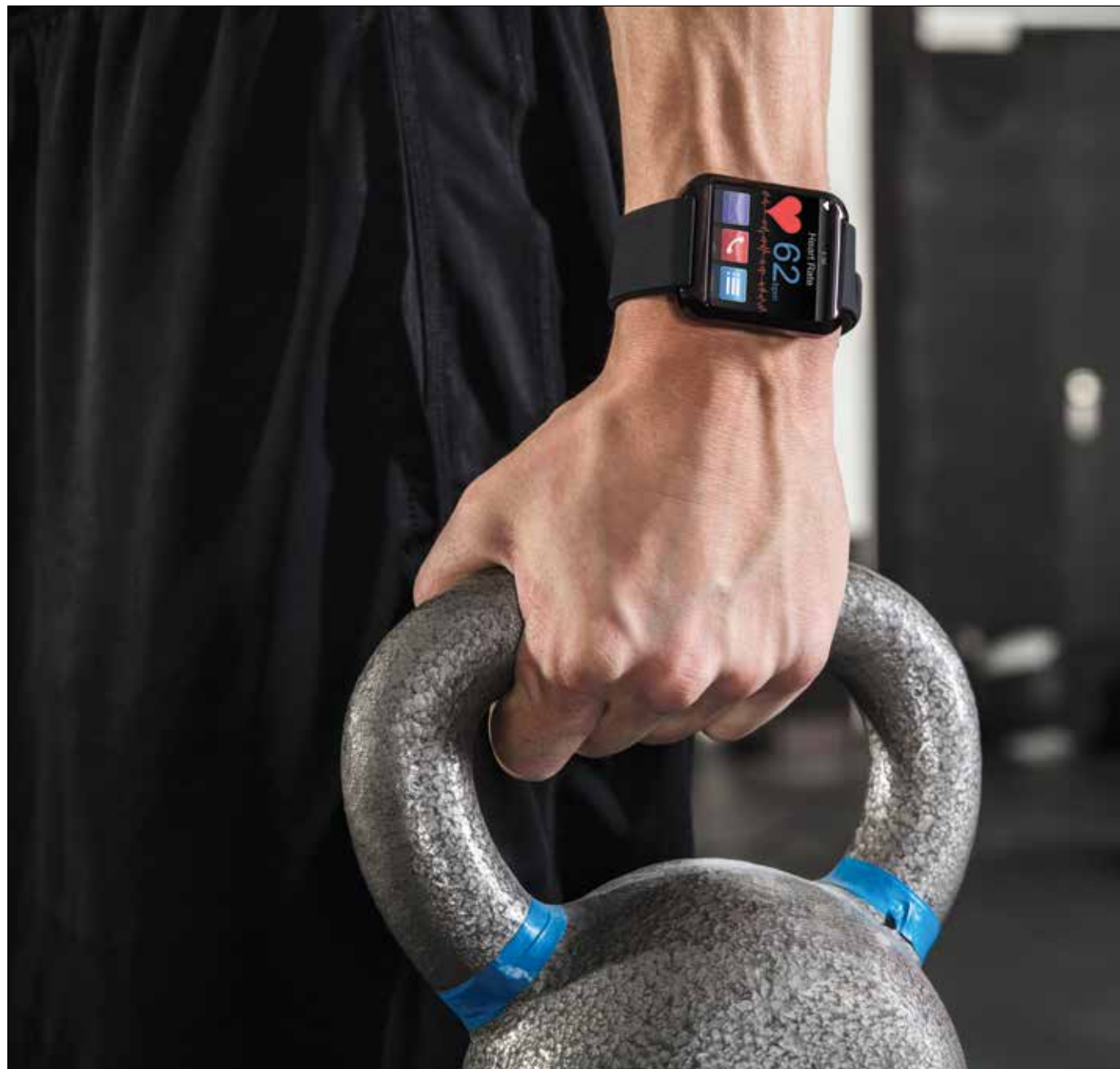
So we've scoured the experts for you to deliver a roundup of the best in apps and wearable tech for 2019.

CALORIE COUNTING AND DIET TRACKER

The best, perhaps only way to lose weight and keep it off is to maintain a healthy diet and exercise. Keeping track of your goals has never been easier with the introduction of such apps as MyFitnessPal. This top-ranked app helps maintain your diet goals by keeping track of calories based on what you eat. MFP maintains a huge database of foods, can quickly scan barcodes of anything not included and syncs with the other top fitness and health apps and wearable tech to achieve and maintain your goals. *\$9.99 monthly/\$49.99 annually*

FITNESS TRACKERS

Fitbit revolutionized fitness trackers by bringing affordable motion-sensor step-counters to consumers prior to the



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introduction of the smartwatch. Fitbit continues to expand, innovate and grow by evolving its line of wearable tech each year, but so does it growing competition in the

market. Still atop the pile is the Fitbit Versa, which Wired Magazine ranks as “a great compromise between functionality, style, and affordability,” includes an accurate heart

rate monitor, step counter, sleep tracker and long battery life. *\$200*

EXERCISE AND TRAINING

If you want to skip the gym

but still benefit from personal training, Men's Health magazine recommends 8Fit, an app that makes it easy to bring your workout home. The app focuses on weekly plans customized to individual fitness based on High Intensity Interval Training, a science-backed mode of exercise ideal for weight loss and fitness. The free app also offers custom meal plans and tracks meals and plans outside the plan. *\$19.99 and up*

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL MOTIVATION

The power of positive thinking has long been an essential element in maintaining diet, fitness and health goals. That motivation can quickly wane if you can't find a positive — some say “happy” — space in your life to enforce your convictions. Happify is a sophisticated app that can help. The app asks you a series of questions and uses “tracks” to achieve your goals and confidence by playing through brief games and activities.

While measuring happiness is an elusive goal itself, the app, according to a New York Times review, can at least offer a helpful mental push toward seeing the glass half full. *\$14.99 and up*

Get Boutique Workouts at Home

Home fitness equipment isn't new, from free weights to fad equipment (remember the Thigh Master?) and gym-quality equipment like NordicTrack and StairMaster.

Most lost their appeal — and began collecting dust — because they lacked a key ingredient: the inspirational, motivating force of other people working out alongside you.

But home fitness has made a big comeback with the introduction of such products as Peloton and Mirror, which stream live or on-demand classes to their equipment. And while these products are expensive, so are gym memberships — especially if you opt for upper-tier memberships at such boutique studios as Orangetheory and SoulCycle.

PELOTON

Peloton has almost single-handedly revived the home fitness movement with its sleek, stationary bike that streams live and on-demand workouts. Since debuting in 2014, the now multibillion dollar company made its name with its \$1,995 bike and ubiquitous TV commercials.

Devotees of the equipment vow by the high-intensity workouts led by top New York City instructors, delivering a boutique-level workout in

your own home on your own time.

Now, Peloton (onepeloton.com) is introducing its latest product, Tread, bringing its video monitor to an upgraded treadmill. The Tread, priced at \$3,995, features a shock-absorbing slat belt, 32-inch high-definition touchscreen, innovative speed and incline knobs, a sturdy carbon-steel frame and free mode function. Subscription to classes are \$19.49 a month (via its app) or \$39 a month via the monitor.

While the price of the Tread may be out of reach for many, it's worth noting that the investment brings with it the live instruction and classes you'd find at more exclusive gyms. The success of its stationary bike bodes well for the Tread. The company's press shines with glowing reviews that claim with its equipment your home is the hot, new workout trend.

MIRROR

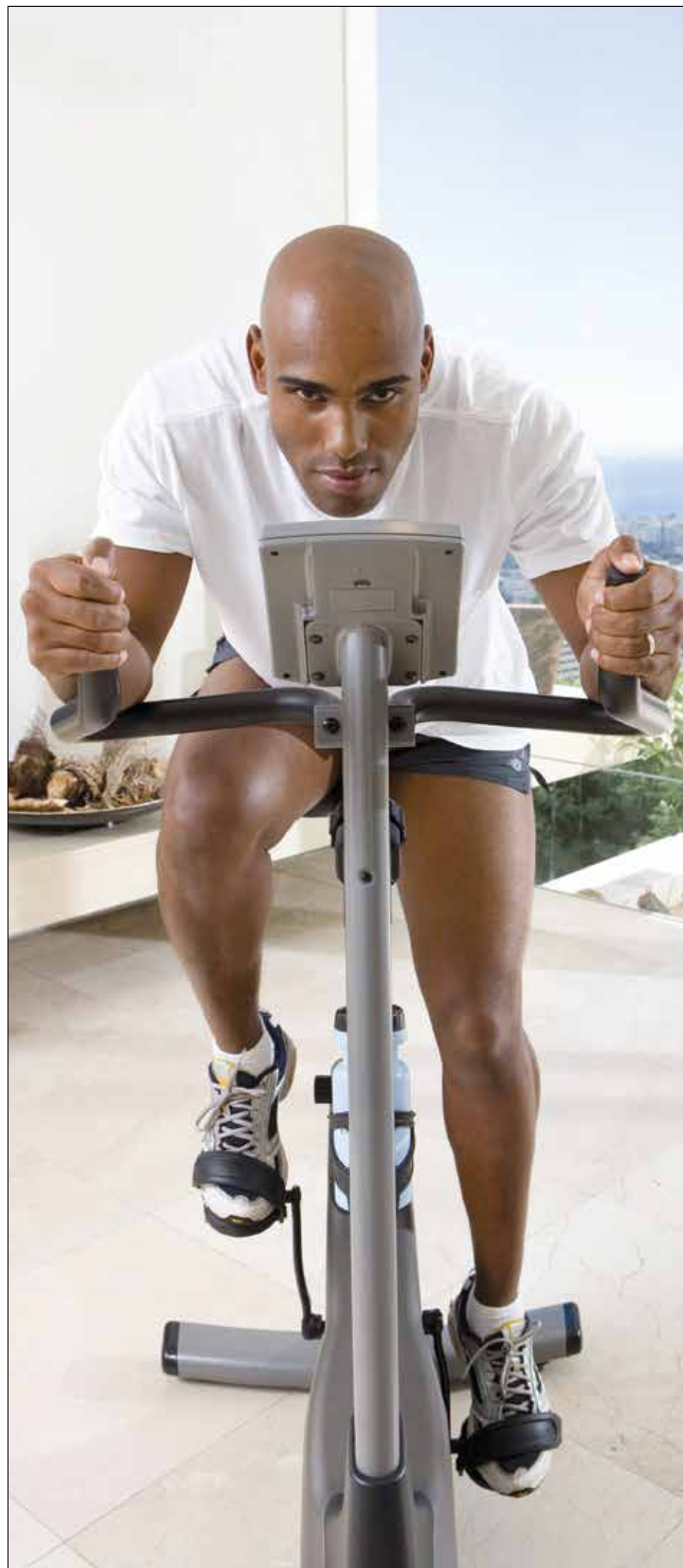
More intriguing — and space-saving than a bike or treadmill — is Mirror.

Like Peloton, Mirror (mirror.co) features live, instruc-

tor-led workouts that stream directly into the full-length mirror with a sleek, interactive display with an embedded camera and speakers. When it's off, it's a full-length mirror. Turn it on and, according to its website, get to work with cardio and strength training or yoga and boxing, streaming unlimited classes from Mirror's New York studio. You can choose from 50-plus new, live classes each week or use Mirror's on-demand library.

Mirror also incorporates your personal fitness profile and biometric data to optimize each workout. You can even tune out the instructor if you choose to focus solely on your own image sweating to a curated soundtrack or own one of your own creation.

Like Peloton equipment, Mirror isn't cheap. For \$1,495 you get Mirror, a starter pack and care kit, wall mount and stand, and its companion (iOS-only) app. Beyond that, a Mirror class subscription costs \$39/month and comes with a one-year minimum commitment. But for a high-tech workout and functionality, it's hard to beat Mirror's program.



Online Health Privacy, Savings

There's almost nothing you can't find online, including professional medical advice and prescriptions. Many insurers offer the ability to consult doctors online and get medications for a variety of minor ailments.

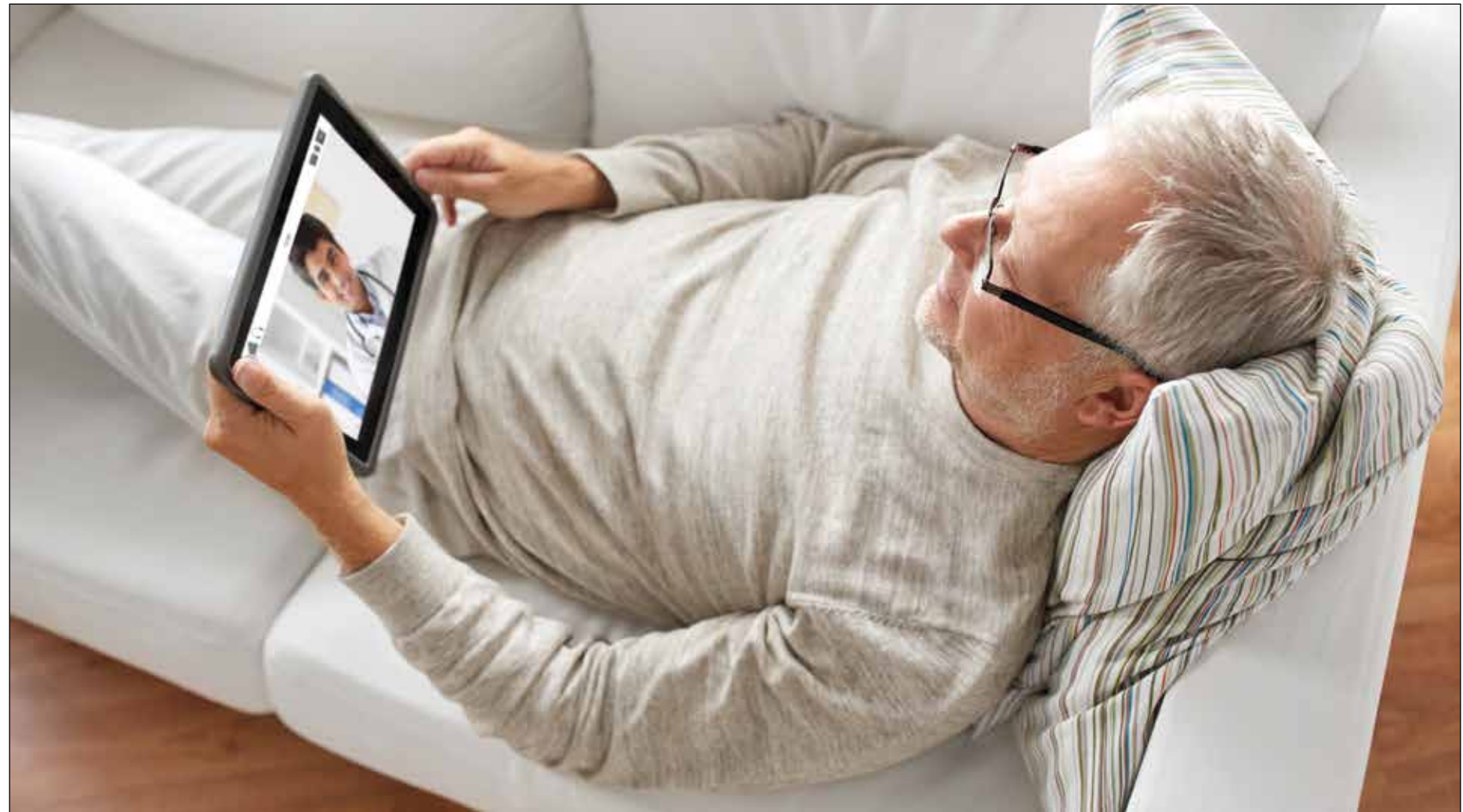
Medical websites such as Amwell and HealthTap make these services more affordable than a visit to your primary care doctor or an urgent care center. But because these services are conducted live on a video camera, they can still be an uncomfortable format for those who want to discuss more intimate issues such as their sex lives. And where there's a need, there's almost always an online service to fill the void.

SEXUAL HEALTH

Chief among these sensitive subjects for men are erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation, among others such as venereal diseases. A new website called Roman (roman.com) has recently launched that may help men come out of the shadows with their issues.

The site allows men to chat with medical doctors, describe their symptoms or issues and receive the appropriate medication, removing the direct personal connection from the equation. The site addresses and treats the most common issues of men's sexual health, such as the aforementioned problems as well as genital herpes. The site also offers treatment for other issues of concern, such as hair loss, prostate enlargement and smoking cessation.

Founded by Zachary Reitano, a tech entrepreneur



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who suffered from heart issues that impacted his sexual health, Reitano was fortunate to have a father who is a physician who specializes in sexual health. Along with his partners, Reitano built a staff of physicians who can address every aspect of care Roman offers and ship medication to each patients' home, ensuring privacy.

After getting diagnosed, you'll get prescriptions shipped by mail, in a discreet package with free two-day

free shipping. You'll receive a box to keep your meds organized and each of your doses will be individually wrapped or in a bottle.

HAIR LOSS

Perhaps taking its cue from services such as Roman, Keeps (keeps.com) brings FDA-approved medications for those with hair loss or early pattern baldness, or MPB.

According to its website, two out of three men will

experience some form of MPB by the time they're 35. While genetics play a huge role, there's no known cure, but there are proven treatments that can combat the symptoms.

Keeps offers the best-known treatments, Rogaine and Propecia, for \$10 and \$25 per month, respectively, at a significant cost savings from purchasing the same medications through local pharmacies. After a chat with a physician, you choose the product

that might best help (or let the doctor choose for you) and the medications are delivered directly to your home.

The company, founded by young men with thinning hair, found its niche in offering effective hair-loss treatments at a discount via their website.

Some find ordering medications on the web impersonal; others find it freeing. But, after all, there may be nothing left to lose — but your hair.

Regular Screenings

Health awareness is the key to a longer life. Simple screenings for most of the top health challenges that affect men early in life can lead to early diagnoses and treatment that can help ensure positive outcomes.

That good news comes from Dr. Jean Bonhomme, a physician and board member of the Men's Health Network, a non-profit organization devoted to men's health awareness.

Bonhomme cited prevention and screening as key to identifying health problems in an interview with the medical website, WebMd.com. "If you don't get your cholesterol checked when it's going high when you're 20, and if don't get your blood pressure checked when it's going high when you're 30, maybe your blood sugar is getting a little high when you're 40, what do you think is going to happen when you're 50?"

Men die at higher rates than women from nine of the top 10 causes of death and are the victims of over 92 percent of workplace deaths. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

In 1920, women lived, on average, one year longer than men. Now, men, on average,



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die almost five years earlier than women. (Centers for Disease Control)

Women are 100 percent more likely to visit the doctor for annual examinations and preventive services than men. (CDC)

Top causes of death among men: heart disease, cancer,

injuries, stroke, suicide and HIV/AIDS.

Many of the top 10 causes of death are preventable and can be treated effectively if diagnosed early. So what can be done? Prevention is key and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers these tips for staying healthy and living

longer.

Get regular physical check-ups and screenings.

Eat healthy and include a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.

Get regular physical activity to help control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease and some cancers, and

improve your mental health and mood.

Set an example by choosing not to smoke and encourage the men in your life to quit smoking.

Reduce stress by recognizing that physical and emotional tension and learn ways to manage stress.

Depression Stigma Diminishes

Much has been written about depression and anxiety in recent years, in large part focusing on the increasing lack of stigma attached to these illnesses. But men still have a much more difficult time in opening up about these issues.

Although the signs and symptoms may be similar for both men and women — sadness or hopelessness, fatigue, sleep issues or a lack of pleasure in enjoyable activities — men deal with depression and anxiety in different ways.

According to the Mayo Clinic, men are much more likely to deal with these issues by engaging in escapist behavior, overindulging in alcohol or drugs, acting out in a violent or abusive manner or becoming involved in risky behavior.

Men are also less likely to be diagnosed with depression than women. The Mayo Clinic cites these reasons why:

Failure to recognize depression. While sadness might be an indicator of depression, it isn't always the only symptom. Men may experience a variety of physical symptoms such as headaches, digestive problems, irritability or long-term



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pain — all of which can indicate depression.

Downplaying signs and symptoms. Men are typically less likely to admit they are experiencing symptoms of depression or to downplay their issues. But ignoring these signs can increase negative behavior as symptoms worsen.

Reluctance to discuss symptoms. Men are much more unlikely to discuss their mental or emotional well-being openly with family or friends, much less a healthcare

professional. Because men are often taught to suppress their emotions, or are told such emotions are not manly or express weakness, finding a resolution becomes a much longer process.

Resisting mental health treatment. Even when men do admit they are suffering from depression or anxiety, they are generally more likely to avoid a diagnosis or to refuse treatment because of perceived stigma.

Fortunately, many male role models from the worlds of

sports, entertainment and politics have opened up about their own experiences with depression and anxiety, making it easier for men to come out of the shadows with their own problems.

Many men now recognize that downplaying or hiding their mental health issues only makes them worse — and more than ever it is becoming a sign of strength to deal with these conditions head-on.

Treating depression or anxiety involves medication, therapy or both, depending upon

individual circumstances and the depth of the underlying issues. A large variety of medications and an even wider array of counseling options are more available than ever before.

So if you believe you are experiencing the emotional or physical manifestations of depression, there's no shame or stigma in seeking help. Tell a friend or family member about your feelings and open up to your physician about these issues. Chances are they'll be eager to help.

Finding Meaning Beyond Money

Stereotypes die hard. That's one reason why the image of the ego-driven, career-focused identity of the American male continues to persist.

While stereotypes are just that because they are built upon a kernel of perceived truth — and Hollywood myths — they're also dangerous to the psyche. And though there may be exceptions, the idea that men must pursue their careers at the cost of all else is wildly outdated.

The button-down, gray flannel-suited man of the postwar era fueled much of these notions, but as time moved forward so did the sole-breadwinner ideal of the American man. By the 1990s, women had fully entered the workforce and men were seeking a work-life balance not seen before in American society. Women wanted it all, but so did men.

A NEW PARADIGM

Following the Great Recession of 2008, Men's Health magazine dubbed the recovery — at least in terms of men's health — as “meaning is the money.” Because the recession was so deep and lasted so long ruining the finances and lives of so many, the recovery helped usher in a



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new meaning of happiness, a concept that was often previously observed as meaning how much money you made. No longer.

The recession peeled back many layers of American life, but perhaps most of all its preoccupation with work at the expense of personal happiness, fulfillment and health.

In its article in the wake of these uneasy times, Dr. Erika Schwartz, a former medical

director of Cinergy Health, says her male patients reported, at an unprecedented rate, that they are out of work and relaxing into the present. “Lately, I’ve been hearing, ‘I love taking care of the kids, I love being home. I really don’t want to go back to Wall Street,’” she says.

The article highlighted five ways to find meaning beyond money:

Disconnect: It’s becoming

harder than ever to separate ourselves from internet-connected devices, but time spent tuning out can reap huge emotional and physical benefits. Constant connection to our devices can breed a sense of isolation and anxiety; taking time away from them can have a grounding effect.

Join a group: Sound too “touchy, feely”? Not true, say experts. Finding common ground with other men — on

almost any topic — can yield emotional rewards. Discovering that your thoughts, feelings and obsessions are not just your own can help ease tension and result in a renewed sense of personal value and true worth.

Develop a daily practice:

This doesn't necessarily mean meditation, prayer or physical stimulus, but creating a new habit each day — a moment or moments of time set aside to recognize your issues — can break down barriers to personal change. Best of all, no one has to know.

Talk with your partner:

Chief among the concerns of many women is the emotional availability and accessibility to their partner. After all, it's not all about how much money you make or your ability to fix the car; relationships require this simple act of selflessness before a crisis occurs.

Communication is paramount in any relationship. Make sure you do as much listening as you do talking.

Summon courage: As the old adage goes, no one wants their tombstone to read, “He worked a lot.” If you want to look back at the end of your life and feel as though you've accomplished something or left a legacy, what better way to do so than to separate your own voice from what others tell you to do. Listening to yourself — while also considering the input of those you love and value — is key to finding personal fulfillment.

Rare Cancer Strikes Teens, Younger Men

Much of the focus of men's health issues tends to revolve around prostate cancer. It's a serious disease that deserves the constant coverage and promotion to encourage men to get screened.

However, it's not alone in men's cancer issues. Prostate cancer typically affects older men. While it the most common type of cancer affecting men (other than skin cancer) it is rare in men under 40. They typical age of diagnosis is 66, according to the American Cancer Society.

While it's rare compared with other types of cancer, testicular cancer is the most common cancer in American males between the ages of 15 and 35, according to the Mayo Clinic.

The good news is that testicular cancer is highly treatable — even when it has spread beyond the testicle. Depending on the type and stage of cancer, the Mayo Clinic reports, you may receive one of several treatments, or a combination.

Here's a list of risk factors and symptoms from the clinic young men should look for:

RISK FACTORS

- An undescended testicle
- Abnormal testicle development
- Family history
- Age. Testicular cancer affects teens and younger men, particularly those between ages 15 and 35. However, it can occur at any age.
- Race. Testicular cancer is more common in white men than in black men.

SYMPTOMS

- A lump or enlargement in

either testicle. Cancer usually affects only one testicle.

- A feeling of heaviness in the scrotum.
- A dull ache in the abdomen or groin.
- A sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum.
- Pain or discomfort in a testicle or the scrotum.
- Enlargement or tenderness of the breasts.

“Embarrassment about symptoms and even confusion with sexually transmitted diseases can prevent some young men from seeking medical help when the disease is at its earliest, most curable stage,” said Dr. Aditya Bagrodia, a testicular cancer specialist and assistant professor of urology at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, in a recent news release.

“Unfortunately, treatment is often delayed,” he said. “Teenage boys have so much going on, and they are not usually in a rush to discuss questions about a possible problem in their genital area with their parents or even their family doctor.”

Bagrodia urges teenagers and young men to perform frequent self-exams and speak with their doctors if they find anything abnormal.

“Diagnosis at an early stage can mean the difference between a straightforward surgical cure and having to potentially undergo chemotherapy, radiation, and multiple surgeries,” he said.

