

# Cult of Mac **Apple's next health frontier: Tackling diabetes with blood sugar app**

By David Snow | Oct 25, 2024 | 4:09 AM



**A**pple is secretly testing a new health app designed to help individuals with prediabetes manage their diet and lifestyle choices, according to a new report. The experimental app, tested with select employees earlier this year, focuses on helping users understand how different foods affect their blood sugar levels. That might help stave off Type 2 diabetes for some.

Some might use it just to marvel at how that cookie is spiking their blood sugar and choose an apple next time, instead.

## **Apple developing a health app to help users understand changing blood sugar levels**

While Apple doesn't have immediate plans to release the app publicly, the technology could eventually be integrated into future health products, including a noninvasive glucose monitoring system that the company has been developing for over a decade, according to Bloomberg. Some of Apple's efforts so far have focused on a possible Apple Watch blood-sugar monitoring sensor. The app could work with that, and with monitoring devices currently on the market.

The testing program required participating employees to confirm their prediabetic status through blood tests. Participants monitored their blood glucose levels using existing market devices and logged how different foods affected their readings. The app's core function was to demonstrate the relationship between food choices and blood sugar levels, potentially helping users make informed decisions to prevent the development of Type 2 diabetes.

For example, if a user noticed their blood sugar spiking after eating pasta, the app could suggest alternative meal options or recommend switching to protein-based foods. This practical approach to dietary management could help users take proactive steps in preventing diabetes.

While the app testing has been temporarily paused to allow Apple to concentrate on other health features, the initiative signals the company's growing interest in glucose

tracking and food logging capabilities. Currently, Apple's Health app lacks comprehensive meal-logging features, suggesting a potential area for future expansion.

## **Not the planned glucose monitor, but related**

This research is separate from but complementary to Apple's ambitious project to develop a noninvasive glucose monitor, most likely an Apple Watch sensor. The company's ultimate goal is to create a device that can analyze blood sugar levels without breaking the skin — a potential game-changer for diabetes management. Currently, most glucose monitoring systems require either finger pricks or semi-invasive patches worn on the body.

The noninvasive monitoring project, known internally as E5, uses laser technology to measure blood glucose levels through the skin. While still years away from commercial release, the company is making progress toward its goal. The initial version is likely to focus on alerting users to potential prediabetic conditions rather than providing specific blood sugar readings.

This initiative follows Apple's pattern of using employee testing programs to refine health features before public release, similar to their development of hearing aid and sleep apnea detection features for AirPods and Apple Watch. The glucose monitoring program was notably secretive, requiring specific manager approval and multiple medical and nondisclosure agreements for participation.