

# Wearable electronics move beyond rigid wristbands

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It's not every day that there's a news story about socks. But in November, a pair won the Best New Wearable Technology Device Award at a Silicon Valley conference. The smart socks, which track foot landings and cadence, are at the forefront of a new generation of wearable electronics, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News* (C&EN), the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

Marc S. Reisch, a senior correspondent at C&EN, notes that stiff wristbands like the popular FitBit that measure heart rate and the number of steps people take have become common. But the long-touted technology needed to create more flexible monitoring devices has finally reached the market. Developers have successfully figured out how to incorporate stretchable wiring and conductive inks in clothing fabric, program them to transmit data wirelessly and withstand washing.

In addition to smart socks, fitness shirts and shoe insoles are on the market already or are nearly there. Although athletes are among the first to gain from the technology, the less fitness-oriented among us could also benefit. One fabric concept product—designed not for covering humans but a car steering-wheel—could sense driver alertness and make roads safer.

**More information:** Fitness Clothing Gets Smart - [cen.acs.org/articles/93/i48/He ... lothing-Getting.html](http://cen.acs.org/articles/93/i48/He...lothing-Getting.html)

Provided by American Chemical Society

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