

Tech review: Two gadgets that are good for your heart and don't tax your brain

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Every once in a while, I review products in what I call the "guilt" category. You know, those products that aren't really fun—they're good for you. Such is the case this week as I'm reviewing a pair of health-related gadgets from Mocacare, the MOCAcuff and MOCaheart. Both of these gadgets are designed to help you keep track of vital health information by syncing the data collected to your smartphone.

MOCAcuff

I know my doctor wants me to keep track of my [blood pressure](#) between visits. This means investing in a blood pressure monitor and actually using it.

The blood pressure monitor I have now is good, but I have to write down the readings if I want to keep a record.

The MOCAcuff (\$69, www.mocacare.com) is a connected blood pressure monitor that uses Bluetooth to make a quick and easy connection to the Mocacare app on your phone.

The MOCAcuff is a wrist cuff that is small and quite easy to put on and use. The Velcro cuff can fit wrists from 5.3 inches to 7.7 inches.

It runs on two AA batteries (included), which should last for around 200 readings. The unit measures just 2.91 x 2.93 x 1.20 inches and weighs just 3.44 ounces. It has a backlit LCD display with nice, easy-to-read

numbers.

You can use the MOCAcuff by itself to measure your blood pressure, but it also connects to your phone via Bluetooth LE.

The MOCAcuff comes with a semi-hard case about the size of a baseball.

MOCAheart

Keeping track of your heart rate, blood flow and [blood oxygen levels](#) can help you monitor your heart's health.

The MOCACheart (\$99, www.mocacare.com) is a small oval about the size of my car's key fob. It's designed to take readings from your thumbs. Press the power button, and the MOCACheart pairs with your smartphone to begin a reading. Lightly hold your thumbs on the MOCACheart and let it do its thing for 30 seconds, and you'll see your reading.

The MOCACheart is very thin and has a small rechargeable battery that charges from an included microUSB cable. You can expect to get three or four days from a charge.

On top of the MOCACheart, you'll find an electrocardiogram sensor (EKG) and a photoplethysmography sensor (PPG). Together they work to provide readings for [heart rate](#) and blood oxygen. Those measurements are displayed as well as an overall blood velocity reading they call the MOCAC Index.

Unlike the MOCACcuff, the MOCACheart requires a phone to work, as it doesn't have a screen to display results.

Mocacare app

When you first set up your MOCA devices, you'll need to download the Mocacare app.

I created an account, and because I was using the app on an iPhone, I was asked if I wanted to sync data collected with Apple's Health app.

Once the app is up and running, if you have your phone's Bluetooth turned on, all you have to do is power up either the MOCAcuff or MOCHeart and press the start button to connect the device to the app.

Readings are stored in a section called My History.

You can add contacts, if you like, so you can share your data with your friends or your doctor.

The connection between the app and the devices worked every time.

MOCA Index

The MOCHeart readings include a number they call the MOCA Index. The Index is expressed as a number from one to five. It is a reading taken from your blood velocity, which is the speed of the blood as it travels through your vessels. Higher blood velocity is a sign of arterial stiffness and is correlated to [high blood pressure](#).

Here's a breakdown of the MOCA Index numbers:

1. Low, which is not normally a cause for concern. Consider seeking care if you are experiencing unusual symptoms.
2. Ideal, which is where you want to be.

3. Raised, which means it might be time to make some lifestyle changes. Check out the app for tips.
4. High, which may indicate health issues. Consider seeking care if unchanged.
5. Very high, which may suggest serious health issues. Seek medical attention if this index level persists.

Conclusions

If you're looking for a new [blood](#) pressure monitor, the MOCAcuff isn't too expensive, and it's easy to use.

The MOCAheart is a slick little bundle of sensors, but I'm guessing it wasn't on very many Christmas lists.

These are the kind of gadgets you buy for someone you love.

These are also the gadgets your doctor might nag you to use.

I can tell you they are easy to use, not too expensive and might just save your life.

MOCAcuff

Pros: Simple interface, works with or without app, easy to use.

Cons: None.

Bottom line: Nice [blood pressure monitor](#) that's convenient to use and has a useful app.

MOCAheart

Pros: Good information from the sensors. Small and easy to use.

Cons: Needs a phone to provide information.

Bottom line: I'm sure everyone's doctor would think this one is great. I agree.

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