

EKG, other heart health features come to Apple Watch

December 6 2018



In this Sept. 12, 2018, file photo, Jeff Williams, Apple's chief operating officer, speaks about the Apple Watch Series 4 at the Steve Jobs Theater during an event to announce new Apple products in Cupertino, Calif. The latest software update to the newest Apple Watch, the Series 4, will now let people take EKGs of their heart and notify them when they have an irregular heartbeat. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez, File)

Apple Watch is now fulfilling its promise to let people take EKGs of

their heart and notify them of any irregular heartbeat.

Apple announced the heart features in September, but didn't make them available until Thursday. The [new features](#) have been given clearance by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and are for U.S. customers only.

The watch can intermittently check the wearer's heart rhythm in the background and send a notification if it detects irregular heart rhythm. That can point to [atrial fibrillation](#), a condition that can increase the risk of stroke and other complications. Apple says the watch will notify users if it detects an irregular rhythm on five checks over at least 65 minutes.

When symptoms appear, users can also take an EKG, or electrocardiogram, and share that with doctors. This feature is available for the latest, Series 4 version of the watch. The app, called ECG, comes as part of a free software update for the watch.

The irregular heart notification is available for older models, too, starting with the "Series 1" model in 2016. It doesn't work with the original, 2015 model.

Apple is adding medical features to make the watch feel more useful to people. A fall detection feature launched in September. It claims to be able to tell the difference between a trip and a fall—and when the latter occurs, it will suggest calling 911 (or the equivalent outside the U.S.). If it receives no response within a minute, the watch will automatically place an [emergency call](#) and message friends and family designated as emergency contacts.

© 2018 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: EKG, other heart health features come to Apple Watch (2018, December 6) retrieved 29 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-12-ekg-heart-health-features-apple.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.