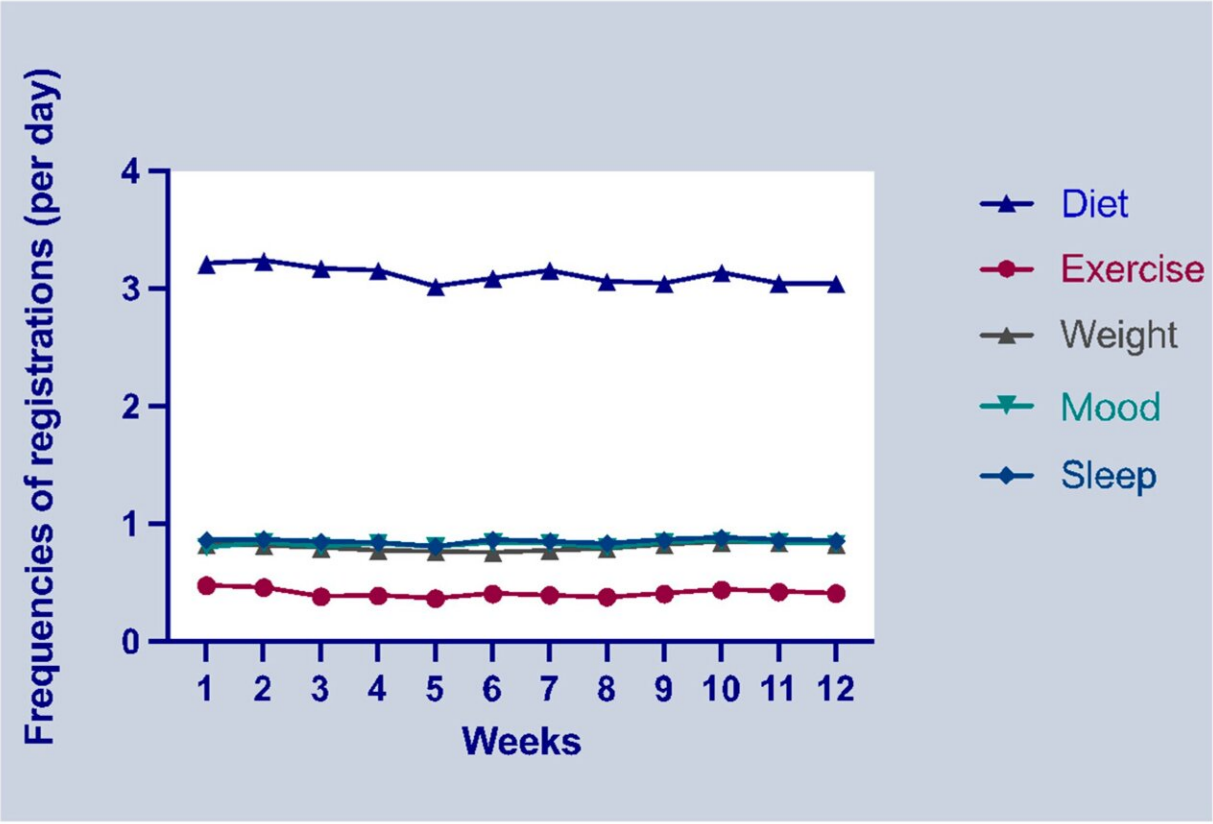
A smartphone health care application is more effective for weight loss among non-walkers

August 8 2024



The mean frequencies of information registrations over three months. Credit: *Nutrients* (2024). DOI: 10.3390/nu16132108

Obesity, a significant risk factor for non-communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, poses a considerable global

public health challenge. Among the various strategies to combat obesity, weight-loss interventions that offer lifestyle modification guidance through web-based services have attracted attention.

Among these, diet and exercise interventions facilitated by smartphone health care apps have emerged as an effective method for weight loss. As the actual impact on weight loss varies among individuals, this study explores the characteristics of successful users of weight-loss apps.

A new study published in *Nutrients*, which is a secondary analysis of data from a previous randomized controlled trial performed by the same research group, evaluated the effectiveness of health care apps.

This analysis focused on 68 overweight or obese adults who had been assigned to the intervention group using the app. Participants who lost 3% of their initial weight were classified as successful weight losers. The analysis aimed to identify associations between participants' characteristics at the start of the weight loss period, their app usage in the first week, and successful weight loss.

The results indicated that individuals who did not have a walking habit at baseline were more likely to achieve successful weight loss with the health care application. This occurred possibly because these participants were more responsive to the application's notifications, which encouraged them to walk and increase their physical activity.

Additionally, the study suggested that a slower walking speed and a family medical history of cardiovascular diseases and diabetes could also be associated with successful weight loss.

The findings will contribute to the development and improvement of future health care applications.

More information: Yutong Shi et al, Exploring Determinants of Successful Weight Loss with the Use of a Smartphone Healthcare Application: Secondary Analysis of a Randomized Clinical Trial, *Nutrients* (2024). DOI: 10.3390/nu16132108