

New smart phone application tracks cancer meds and side effects

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We do it when we drive, when we're at work, when we're suppose to be listening to something important ... I'm sure we do it when we're getting chemo or waiting for the oncologist--talking on the phone, texting, using those many smart phone apps that make our lives so much easier (or at least less mundane).

Ours is a plugged-in world and it was only a matter of time before smart phone applications began to be developed for cancer patients.

This month, Merck launched a free iPhone application called iChemoDiary, which serves as an interactive health diary to help patients and caregivers record chemo schedules, note medication and treatment plans, and log side effects as they happen (feel like vomiting two hours after chemo? Whip out your phone and make it official).

You can also log your temperature and severity of certain side effects. The only thing it appears to lack is the ability to write in side effects that aren't included in the application. (Although the main side effects are included--pain, nausea, fatigue, diarrhea, rash, lack of appetite, neuropathy, and constipation--there may be other side effects you may want to make note of).

What's so neat about this application is that patients can e-mail a daily or weekly report to themselves to print off and give to their medical team. No more carrying around your cancer notebook everywhere or trying to remember when that funny rash appeared.

This is, by far, the most comprehensive and useful application yet to make it to the market. Another, called TouchOut Cancer, developed by a cancer survivor and released earlier this year, gives up-to-date cancer news from various organizations, such as the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, I'm Too Young for This Cancer Foundation, and The Cancer Schmancer Movement.

Here are a few other applications that might make your cancer journey a little less stressful (or at least a little more entertaining):

1. Social networking applications like **Twitter** and **Facebook** have made it vogue to let the world know you're sitting in the infusion room ready for your dose of the "red devil" (aka: Adriamycin) or that you're feeling down and really need some instant words of encouragement.

2. **Loopt**, which acts similar to a GPS, is an application that can show where you or your friends are at a particular moment. Kind of creepy, but if you're chilling in Waiting Room 1 for your radiation, it might be cool to find out a Loopt acquaintance is in Waiting Room 2. A new app just out this week called **Loopt Mix** introduces you to nearby people that you may have something in common with,

and allows you to message back and forth. (It doesn't show exact locations, but proximity--little less creepy).

3. **Bump**, which gained fame as being the iPhone's billionth application downloaded, makes exchanging contact information a breeze. Need to know your oncology nurse's e-mail, cell, and work address? Both of you can open the Bump application, do the Obama fist bump, and voila!

4. The **Kidney Cancer Association** created an [application](#) that mirrors information on their website, but also offers a trivia quiz, podcasts, and video.

So, do you use any smart phone applications to keep you occupied at the clinic? Please share!