



## Wearables Weekly

Compiled by Sarah Kunkle and Gillian Christie

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*Featured this week: an acquisition by Jawbone and a new smart scale from Withings. In other headlines, IBM Watson announces another big health partnership and people react to the CEO of the American Medical Association calling digital health the new “snake oil.” Read the latest below!*

### [Jawbone's secret 2015 acquisition sheds light on its rumored clinical wearable](#)

According to MobiHealthNews, Jawbone acquired a company in 2015 that could shed some light on plans for a clinical wearable. The company acquired Spectros, a startup founded by current Jawbone Chief Medical Officer David Benaron. Spectros is an 11-year-old company with at least six patents and several published studies. Spectros has focused on developing a variety of non-invasive molecular sensors that could be used commercially for pulse oximetry, and detection of perfusion and ischemia. Jawbone's growth strategy has included several acquisitions including BodyMedia, the first big consolidation in the wearables space, and nutrition apps Massive Health and Nutrivise.

**Importance:** Last month there were rumors that Jawbone was exiting the wearables market and that the company was working on a last-ditch wearable, a clinical grade device for heart monitoring. This acquisition shows that Jawbone has the technology to release a wearable with advanced sensor technology.

### [The Blocks modular smartwatch is finally \(almost\) ready](#)

The Blocks modular smartwatch seems to be finally hitting assembly lines a few years after its initial announcement. At launch, users can choose from six modules: a GPS unit, an extra battery, a pulse sensor, a humidity/temperature/altitude sensor, a programmable button and a flashlight. The company says it is working on add-ons for body temperature, perspiration, fingerprint authentication and gesture control. Since the platform is open, third-party developers can make more parts as well. Each Blocks device comes with a “Core” watch face unit, along with four to five modules that form the strap. The company has at least 5,500 orders from Kickstarter to fulfill. You can pre-order the set for \$330.

**Importance:** Different users want different things from smartwatches. Similar to modular smartphones, a modular smartwatch solves the problem of a “one size fits all” approach to wearable technology.

### [Withings's super-smart Body Cardio scale keeps an eye on your heart's health](#)

Withings has introduced two new connected scales: the \$129.95 Body and \$179.95 Body Cardio. The Body Cardio tracks Pulse Wave Velocity (PWV), a metric that tracks how quickly your heartbeat vibrations spread through your arteries, which is widely recognized by the medical community as an indicator of your cardiac health. Faster PWV indicates high blood pressure, stiff arteries, and a risk of hypertension. Both scales sync with a corresponding app — the Withings Health Mate — which automatically stores all of the data from the scale. The app also includes a coaching component, which lets users set weight-related goals.

**Importance:** Connected scales help people skip the step of manually entering weight data, which eases the process of health tracking. Additionally, the Body Cardio's ability to track Pulse Wave Velocity provides an important health metric beyond weight.

## Other Health Technology Headlines

[5 Trends to Watch in Digital Health for People Over 50](#)

[A few takeaways from AMA head's digital health snake oil critique](#)

[A Promising New Way To Spot Cancer? Your Search History](#)

[Body sensors, Uber care, prescription apps: How medical technology is going to make 100 the new 60](#)

[Devices for Self-Monitoring Sedentary Time or Physical Activity: A Scoping Review](#)

[Fitbit Introduces "Fitbit Group Health"](#)

[IBM Watson Health to help ADA with diabetes research, education](#)

[Lenovo just made a phone that can bend on your wrist like a snap bracelet](#)

[New FDA draft guidance encourages medical device makers to share data with patients](#)

[Phone app that can detect heart attack a week out considered by NHS](#)

*If you would like to subscribe to Wearables Weekly or have any other comments/questions, please contact Gillian Christie, Health Innovation Analyst at [gchristie@thevitalitygroup.com](mailto:gchristie@thevitalitygroup.com).*