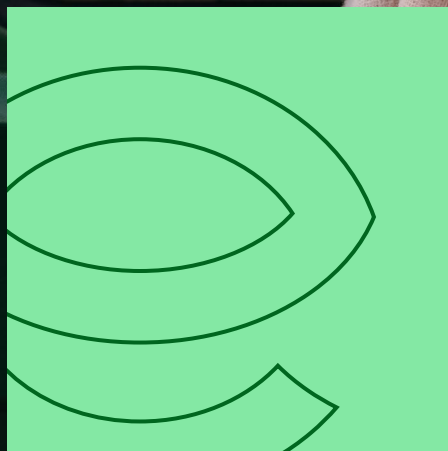




Focused on accessibility

How wearable tech transforms
health and daily life

INTRODUCTION

Wearable technology is rapidly evolving from a consumer gadget into a meaningful health and accessibility tool

The next generation of wearable eyewear is demonstrating real potential to improve independence, communication, health monitoring and overall quality of life.

Innovations such as Meta smart glasses and Nuance Audio glasses are helping people navigate visual impairments, hearing loss and mobility limitations in ways that were not possible just a few years ago. Combined with advances in artificial intelligence (AI), open-ear audio technology and real-time health monitoring, wearable devices are becoming part of a broader movement toward personalized, preventive and accessible healthcare.



For employers, health plans and healthcare leaders, these technologies represent a growing opportunity to support member well-being, improve access to care and help individuals maintain independence longer





From episodic care to continuous health engagement

Wearables have become mainstream

What began as step counters and fitness trackers has evolved into technology capable of monitoring sleep quality, heart rate, physical activity, stress indicators and other health-related metrics.¹

The World Health Organization (WHO) is now actively exploring how wearable technology can be integrated into population health monitoring systems because of its ability to provide more accurate and continuous health data than traditional self-reporting methods²



In a recent survey,

59% of consumers

reported owning a wearable device such as a smartwatch, fitness tracker or similar technology³

¹ "Exploring the Role of Wearable Devices in Promoting Behavior Change and Monitoring Health Outcomes"; KDH Research & Communication; kdhr.com; September 2025. ² "Integrating wearable technology into population health monitoring systems for physical activity measurement"; World Health Organization; who.int; May 2026. ³ "Exploring the Role of Wearable Devices in Promoting Behavior Change and Monitoring Health Outcomes"; KDH Research & Communication; kdhr.com; September 2025.



New opportunities for visual accessibility

Among the most exciting developments in wearable technology is the emergence of AI-powered smart glasses designed to help people with low vision or blindness navigate daily life more independently.

Meta's partnership with **Be My Eyes** represents a particularly significant advancement. Through a simple voice command, users can connect with a global network of volunteers who can see through the glasses' camera and provide real-time assistance for everyday tasks.

This hands-free functionality offers advantages over traditional smartphone-based accessibility tools because users can continue performing tasks while receiving support.⁴ The Be My Eyes platform now serves more than 1 million blind and low-vision users worldwide and is supported by more than 10 million volunteers across 150+ countries.⁵

For individuals with visual impairments, the combination of AI, wearable cameras and human assistance creates a powerful new category of support that can enhance confidence, independence and social participation.

Expanding independence

The potential benefits of smart glasses extend beyond vision loss. Because many smart-glass functions can be activated entirely through voice commands, they can benefit individuals with reduced dexterity, mobility impairments or neurological conditions that make smartphone use difficult.

Ray-Ban Meta and Oakley Meta smart glasses now offer features that allow users to:⁶

- Receive descriptions of their surroundings
- Identify objects
- Read printed text
- Access real-time contextual information
- Connect with sighted assistance through voice commands



For individuals managing disabilities or chronic conditions that affect hand function, voice-first technology can reduce barriers to communication and daily activities while promoting greater autonomy.

Without needing to handle a mobile device, users can:⁷

- Send messages
- Access information
- Make phone calls
- Capture images
- Receive directions
- Interact with AI assistants

⁴ "AI glasses empower people who are blind or low-vision"; Meta; meta.com; 2025. ⁵ "Be My Eyes and Meta Announce Accessibility Partnership"; Be My Eyes; bemyeyes.com; September 2025. ⁶ "Accessibility Technology for Blind & Low Vision People"; Be My Eyes; bemyeyes.com; 2026. ⁷ "AI glasses from Meta: Empowering Accessibility"; Meta; meta.com; 2025.



Addressing hearing loss

Hearing loss is a global and growing public health issue, particularly among older adults.⁸

More than
1.5 billion

people worldwide live
with hearing loss today⁹

700
million

people will require
hearing rehabilitation
by 2050¹⁰

Untreated hearing loss can contribute to:¹¹

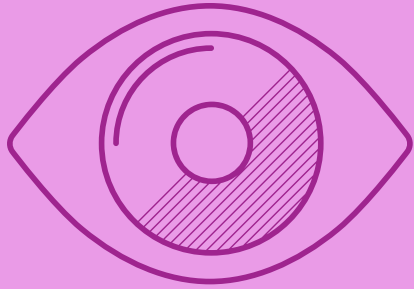
- Social isolation
- Communication difficulties
- Reduced workplace productivity
- Mental health challenges
- Lower quality of life



Traditional hearing aids have long faced barriers related to comfort, visibility, stigma and accessibility. Nuance Audio glasses seek to address these challenges by integrating hearing assistance directly into everyday eyewear.

⁸ "The global prevalence of complete hearing loss in 204 countries and territories from 1992 to 2021: a systematic analysis for the global burden of disease study 2021"; National Library of Medicine; nlm.nih.gov; April 9, 2025. ⁹ "Hearing Loss and the role of health care providers: Fact Sheet"; World Health Organization; who.int; February 15, 2024. ¹⁰ "Deafness and Hearing Loss"; World Health Organization; who.int; March 2026.

¹¹ "A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Impact of Hearing on Quality of Life"; Quality of Life Research; link.springer.com; November 2024.



Now what you see
is what you hear

In February 2025, EssilorLuxottica announced FDA clearance for Nuance Audio glasses, describing them as the first FDA-cleared preset Software as a Medical Device integrated into smart eyewear. The glasses use open-ear hearing technology built into the frame, allowing individuals with perceived mild-to-moderate hearing loss to amplify conversations without traditional hearing aids.¹²



Nuance Audio aims to serve approximately

1.25 billion

people worldwide experiencing
mild-to-moderate hearing loss¹²

AI-powered wearables and the future of preventive health

While today's smart glasses focus primarily on communication, accessibility and situational awareness, the future potential is far broader.

Beyond just fitness tracking

Wearable devices can provide ongoing insights that help users and providers identify concerns earlier and support healthier behaviors



Wearables are increasingly becoming platforms for:¹³

- Continuous health monitoring
- Early warning systems
- Behavioral coaching
- Digital health interventions
- Chronic disease management

The value of wearable technology lies in its ability to generate real-time, real-world health data. Combined with AI, these data streams can help identify trends, support adherence to treatment plans and encourage healthier behaviors before health issues become serious. Wearable devices already support monitoring related to physical activity, sleep quality, stress indicators and recovery patterns.¹⁴ As this technology evolves, wearable devices may increasingly serve as health companions that help individuals manage both wellness and chronic conditions between provider visits.

¹² "EssilorLuxottica receives FDA clearance and EU certifications for Nuance Audio"; EssilorLuxottica; essilorluxottica.com; February 2025. ¹³ "The Rise of Wearable Devices and Consumer-Centric Healthcare Ecosystems"; Dinkum Journal of Medical Innovation; dinkumpublishers.com; 2025. ¹⁴ "Exploring the Role of Wearable Devices in Promoting Behavior Change and Monitoring Health Outcomes"; KDH Research & Communication; kdhr.com; September 2025.

Why this matters for health plans and employers

Smart glasses represent an emerging category of digital health tools that may help improve member engagement, reduce barriers to care and enhance quality of life for individuals managing health conditions including:

- Healthy aging
- Accessibility and inclusion
- Chronic disease management
- Hearing and vision health
- Social connectedness
- Preventive care engagement
- Independent living



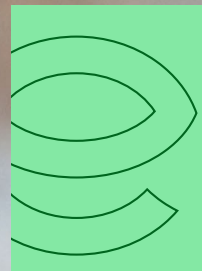


CONCLUSION

More than counting steps or capturing photos

The next chapter of wearable technology is no longer about counting steps or capturing photos. Smart glasses demonstrate how wearable innovations can support health, accessibility and independence in meaningful ways. For people living with visual impairments, hearing loss, mobility challenges or chronic health conditions, these technologies offer practical benefits that can improve day-to-day functioning and overall quality of life.

As healthcare increasingly shifts toward prevention, personalization and continuous engagement, wearable devices may play a growing role in helping people not only monitor their health but also participate more fully in the world around them.



To learn more about EyeMed's focus on accessibility and innovation, visit eyemed.com