

Plethys Announces Product to Improve Smartwatch Sensor Performance for Tattoos, Skin Tone, Low Vascularity, and More

Millions of smartwatch users have problems tracking their sleep, stress, fitness, and overall health due to tattoos, skin tone, or vascularity. Is a fix coming?

SAN DIEGO, CA, UNITED STATES, June 17, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A decade after smartwatches emerged as a leading health & wellness tool, some consumers remain frustrated by the exclusionary science behind the device. Users with tattoos, darker skin tone, obesity, dense and dark body hair, or other physical traits affecting blood flow may find that the technology will never fully work for them. This is because the watch's non-invasive optical heart rate sensor can be incapable of maintaining a reliable signal when faced with certain conditions – the foundation for what makes a smartwatch “smart”.



Plethys plans to launch the Universal Elastic Lens on Amazon in October 2024.

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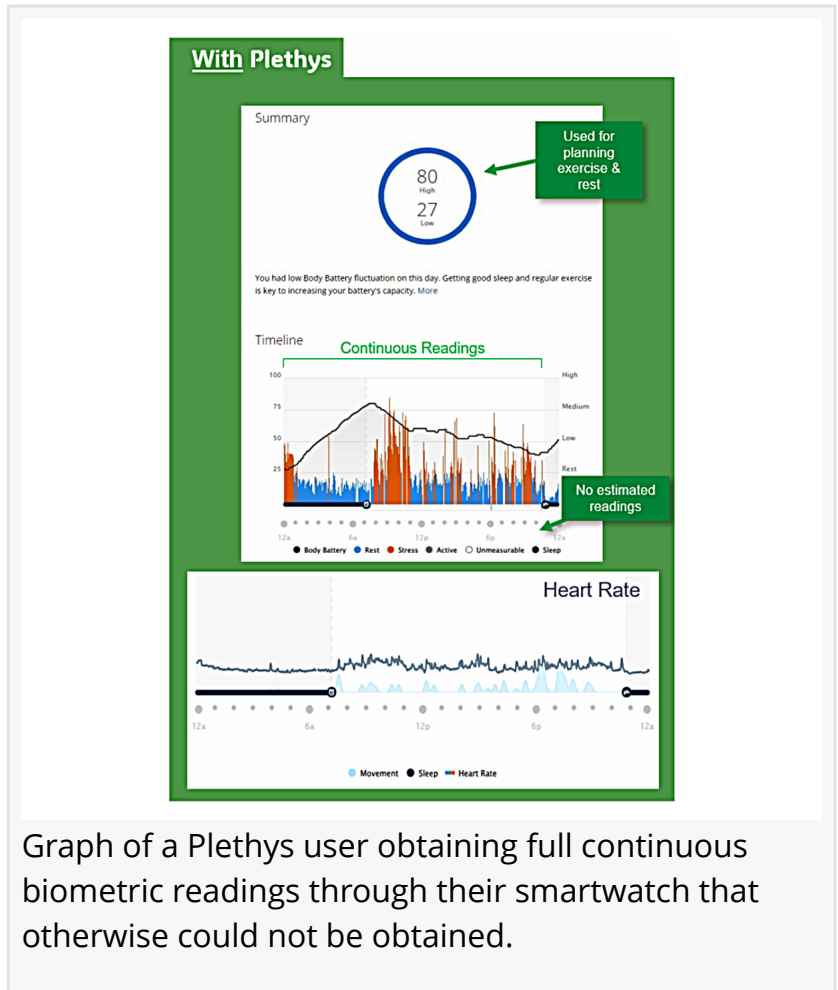
The pausing during workouts drives me insane!! All my watch is good for is telling the time and tracking steps.”

User on TikTok

Although many consumers are happy with their device and can utilize the technology to gamify a healthier lifestyle, the commonalities across troubled populations show that the technology isn't engineered for everyone. This has resulted in a few pending class action lawsuits against manufacturers for racial discrimination. And those left on the sidelines are starting to amount to serious figures.

Forecasts for 2024 show steady growth with 225 million smartwatch users fueling the ever-growing \$48 billion U.S. dollar industry. Research estimates show that between 1% and 5% of all smartwatch users may have a mild or serious sensor-related problem, equating to between 2 million and 11 million consumers. Given the average price of a smartwatch falling between \$200 - \$500 U.S. dollars, that is cause for concern in today's price-sensitive economy.

Social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Reddit have served as self-help groups for users to express grievances and offer workarounds. Some users have resorted to purchasing additional tracking devices such as smart rings that often cost more than the watch itself. Other have resorted to “hacks” by putting nail polish remover over the sensor without any guaranteed improvement, or applying epoxy stickers that fall off easily and must be replaced daily. A few users are going to greater lengths by having parts of their tattoo laser removed. One TikTok user wrote, “I got tired of unlocking my Apple Watch every 2 minute and not be[ing] able to use the features I bought it for.” Another stated, “All my watch is good for is telling the time and tracking steps”.



Graph of a Plethys user obtaining full continuous biometric readings through their smartwatch that otherwise could not be obtained.

A recent MBA graduate from San Diego State dealt with the problem for 9 years and found that the issue has become too big to ignore. After noticing a tattooed cyclist riding with their smartwatch on their ankle, Andrew Gladue was inspired to start the company [Plethys](#) and commit to bringing an affordable commercialized solution to market to help anyone in need. Andrew explained that “the trick to bridging the gap for impacted users is to create light tunnels from the watch’s sensor that can generate new optical paths which reduce the signal’s ambient distance and increases displaced strength.” He believes that a greater share of users may not be aware that they are having smartwatch problems based on the make and model purchased, as they would need to be in tune with their daily biometric data or recognize that some of the promised functionalities have never worked. That leads him to believe that the impacted user base is conservatively around 10 million people today. After promising early-phase trials, Plethys is excited to list their first patent-pending [product](#) on Amazon in the fall of 2024.

For a limited time, anyone in the U.S. that wants to improve the reliability of their smartwatch can get the Plethys product for free by signing up as a beta tester at [Plethys.com](#).

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