



An Extended Guide · No. 1686

Sharing Wearable Health Data With Your Doctor & Family, Safely

What to share, how to share it, and the
privacy facts most people are never told

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

BillsHomeTech.com · (330) 200-8042 · Atwater, Ohio

Free & printable — share it with someone who needs it



Book a visit —
billshometech.com/book

! Read this first — helpful gadgets, not medical devices

A quick, important note before we start. The rings, watches, and earbuds in this guide are everyday consumer gadgets, not medical equipment, and I am a tech helper, not a doctor or a nurse. What follows is plain-English general information to help you understand and set up these devices — it is not medical advice, and it cannot replace your doctor. A wearable can be a helpful extra set of eyes, but it can also miss things or raise a false alarm, so never ignore how you actually feel because of what a gadget says. If you have symptoms or a health worry, call your doctor, and in an emergency call 911. This guide is general information, not medical advice, and about sharing data, not interpreting it. Your doctor decides what your numbers mean. In an emergency, call 911 — don't send a file.

Your watch has a lot of numbers. Who should see them?

Steps, sleep, heart rate and more pile up on your wearable. Shared well, they can help a doctor visit. Shared carelessly, they can expose something private.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I've spent 30+ years helping people feel at home with their technology, patiently and in plain language. I'm a tech helper, not a doctor, and I sell no devices or apps, so I'm only here to help you do this sensibly.

We'll cover making a summary for a doctor's visit, sharing with family, what doctors actually find useful, and the privacy facts most people are never told.

★ Take it slowly

None of this is urgent, and you control what is shared. If you'd like company while you set it up, call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only a handful of things, let it be these.

- Before a visit, make a short summary or PDF of what matters, not every number your watch has ever recorded.
- Apple Health and Google's health apps can export or share data, and you choose what.
- Family sharing can be useful, but share only with people you trust, and know how to stop sharing.
- Consumer health apps and wearable makers are generally NOT covered by HIPAA the way your doctor's records are.
- Guard your account with a strong, unique password and two-step sign-in.
- Scammers target health data; never give codes or passwords to a caller.
- Doctors usually want trends and specific alerts, not a data dump.

! Privacy reality check

Your doctor's records have strong legal privacy protections. Data in a consumer wearable app generally does not have the same protection, so be choosy about who and what you share with.

What your wearable actually collects

Knowing what is there helps you decide what to share.

- Steps, activity and workouts.
- Heart rate, and on some models irregular-rhythm notices and ECG records.
- Sleep length and stages.
- Location during workouts or when SOS is used.
- Details you typed in: age, weight, medicines, Medical ID.

These live in the maker's app, such as Apple Health or Google's Fitbit and health apps, and often on the company's servers too. Settings let you see and manage them.

Look before you share

Open your health app and scroll through what it holds. Most people are surprised. You can only protect what you know about.

What doctors find useful, and what is noise

More data is not always better. A short, clear picture helps most.

Usually helpful	Often just noise
A resting heart-rate trend over weeks	Every heart-rate reading all day
A saved ECG or alert tied to a symptom	A 'readiness score' you can't explain
Notes on dates, times, and how you felt	Daily step counts from two years ago
Blood-pressure or glucose logs your doctor asked for	Sleep-stage charts with no question attached

Some doctors enjoy watch data and others have little time for it. Ask your doctor's office what they prefer before you spend an evening exporting.

★ **Bring a question, not a pile**
'My watch flagged an irregular rhythm on three mornings. Can you take a look?' beats a stack of printouts every time.

Preparing a one-page summary

A single clear page is the most useful thing you can bring.

- Write what you want to ask, in one or two sentences.
- List dates and times of any alerts and how you felt.
- Note any changes in routine, medicine or sleep around those times.
- Attach one or two screenshots or a PDF export, not dozens.
- List your current medicines.
- Bring it on paper or on your phone, and ask whether they prefer it sent ahead.

Putting it in your own words shows the doctor what worries you. The charts support your story rather than replacing it.

Ask the office how they'd like it

Some offices take records through a secure patient portal. Others prefer paper at the visit. Ask the front desk.

Apple Health: exporting and sharing

Apple Health keeps your data on your iPhone, with options to share.

- In the Health app, tap your picture, then look for Export All Health Data to make a file. That file is large and is usually more than a doctor needs.
- For a single item, open it (such as a heart-rate chart) and look for a share option, or take a screenshot.
- ECG records can usually be exported as a PDF from the Heart section.
- Under Sharing, you can invite family members to see selected data.
- Some health systems connect to Apple Health to link records.

Menu names change with software versions. If you do not see a choice, use the search in Health or ask me to find it.

! The full export is a lot

'Export All Health Data' produces a huge file with everything. Do not email it around. Choose a PDF or screenshot of just what you need.

Google, Fitbit and Samsung: exporting and sharing

Android and Fitbit users have similar options, with different names.

- In the Fitbit or Google health app, look for a report, summary or export option.
- Some versions create a shareable PDF report of trends over a time range.
- Samsung Health and its monitor app can save ECG results as a PDF.
- Google's account tools let you download a copy of your data.
- Check the sharing or family settings for who can see what.

These apps are redesigned fairly often. If you cannot find a feature, check the maker's help page for your app, or call me and we will look together.

A screenshot is a fine start

If exporting looks daunting, a clear screenshot of the one chart you need is perfectly fine for most doctor visits.

Sharing with family and caregivers

A loved one seeing your trends can ease worry on both sides.

Several platforms let you invite a family member or caregiver to view selected data, such as activity or heart alerts, and you pick which categories. You are usually able to stop sharing at any time.

The key is that you decide, and that you understand what they can see. Sharing is a gift of trust, not an obligation, and a good family member will respect a 'no thank you'.

! Share the smallest amount that helps

If a daughter wants to know you are active each day, share activity, not everything. Review the list of people with access every few months.

The privacy reality: HIPAA mostly doesn't apply

This surprises almost everyone, so let's say it plainly.

HIPAA is the federal law that protects health records held by your doctor, hospital and insurer. In general it does not cover what a consumer wearable maker or fitness app holds about you. Those companies have their own privacy policies, which they can change.

There are some other protections. For example, the FTC has a rule requiring many health apps and connected devices outside HIPAA to tell people about certain data breaches. That is a notice rule, though, not a promise that your data stays private. I am a tech helper, not a lawyer, so ask a professional about legal specifics.

! Treat app data as shareable

Assume anything in a consumer health app could be seen by the company, used for marketing under its policy, or exposed in a breach. Share and store accordingly.

Reading a privacy policy without a law degree

You do not need to read every word. Look for a handful of things.

- Do they sell or share your data with other companies or advertisers?
- Do they share it with insurers or employers?
- Can you delete your data and your account?
- What happens to your data if the company is sold or shuts down?
- How do they say they protect it?

Search the policy page for words like 'sell', 'share', 'advertising' and 'delete'. If the answers worry you, that is useful information.

Choose settings, not just apps

Many apps have privacy toggles for ads and data sharing. A few minutes in settings can make a real difference.

Locking down your account

Your account is the front door to all this data.

- Use a strong, unique password for each health and wearable account.
- Turn on two-step sign-in for the account.
- Use a passcode on your phone and your watch.
- Keep the phone and watch software updated.
- Sign out of accounts on shared or borrowed devices.
- Review which apps and people have access, and remove the ones you don't use.

A password manager makes unique passwords easy. We cover that in other guides, and I'd be glad to help you set one up.

★ The best lock is the one you actually use

Two-step sign-in is a minute of setup that blocks most account break-ins. Call (330) 200-8042 and I will do it with you.

Health-data scams to watch for

Scammers love health information, and they love worried people.

- Calls or texts claiming your watch 'detected a problem' and asking for payment.
- Emails pretending to be your wearable company asking you to 'verify' your login.
- Callers asking for your Medicare number to 'send a free monitor'.
- Anyone asking for a code that was texted to you.
- Offers of a miracle device that 'cures' what your watch finds.

Real companies and doctors do not ask for your password or a text code. If you are unsure, hang up and call the number on your card or the company's own website.

! Never read out a code

A code sent to your phone is the key to your account. Nobody legitimate will ask you to read it to them.

Your doctor's patient portal

A portal is the safest way to send information to your doctor.

Many practices have a secure online portal where you can message the office, upload documents and see results. Records sent through it are protected by the practice's health-privacy rules, which is better than a regular email.

If you do not have a portal login, ask the front desk how to get one. Do not post health details in a social media message or send them over ordinary text unless the office asks you to.

Ask before you upload

Some offices have limits on file types and sizes. A one-page PDF is almost always welcome.

The wearer and the helper

Sharing looks different depending on which chair you sit in.

If you are the one wearing it

It is your body and your data, and you set the rules.

- Decide what you are willing to share, and with whom.
- Pick a few meaningful items for the doctor, not everything.
- Review your sharing list now and then.
- It is fine to say no, or to turn sharing off.

If you are the family member or caregiver

You care, and you want to help without hovering.

- Ask permission, and explain why you'd like to see it.
- Look at trends, and call rather than reacting to a single number.
- Remember a watch can miss things; it does not replace a visit.
- Protect their login information as carefully as you would your own.

★ I can help you set boundaries

A neutral helper can make these conversations easier. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

Special care with heart alerts and ECG records

Heart data is among the most sensitive, and the most misunderstood.

If your watch flags an irregular rhythm or records an ECG, saving that record and bringing it to your doctor is a smart move. Our guide on Heart-Rate, ECG & Afib Alerts on Wearables explains what these features can and cannot tell you.

Remember: these are screening aids, not diagnoses. Share the record to start a conversation, not to settle one. Never change a medicine because of what a watch shows.

! Symptoms outrank data

If you have chest pain, fainting, or trouble breathing, call 911. Do not stop to export a file.

Deleting data and closing accounts

You are allowed to take your information back.

- Most apps let you delete individual records or entire categories.
- Look in the app's settings for account or privacy options, and for a delete account choice.
- Download any data you want to keep before you delete.
- Check the company's policy for how long deleted data is retained.
- If you sell or give away a watch, sign out and erase it first.

Resetting a watch before it leaves your hands protects your history and your Medical ID. Ask me if you want a hand with that.

Erase before you trade in

An old watch that still holds your health data is a privacy risk. Sign out and erase it first.

Third-party apps asking for your data

Sometimes another app asks to connect to your health data.

Health apps often ask permission to read data from Apple Health or a similar hub. Some are useful, such as a diabetes or blood-pressure log. Many are not, and some resell what they collect.

Read the permission screen. You can usually allow some categories and not others. If an app wants far more than it needs for its job, say no.

! Free apps pay their bills somehow

If an app is free and asks for lots of health data, ask how the company earns money. Sometimes the answer is your information.

Insurance, employers and wellness programs

Some programs ask you to share wearable data in exchange for a perk.

Employer wellness programs and some insurance or rewards programs may offer incentives for sharing activity data. Ask exactly what is collected, who sees it, whether it can affect cost or coverage, and whether you can opt out.

Read the permission carefully, and when in doubt ask the program in writing. A discount can be fine, but know what you're trading for it.

! Understand the trade

If you are not sure how shared data might be used, hold off until you have an answer you understand.

Sending a file safely

How you send it matters as much as what you send.

Method	Good for	Watch out for
Patient portal	Most records to your doctor	Need an account first
Printed page	Handing over at the visit	Don't leave it behind
Secure message from the practice	When the office offers it	Use their link only
Plain email or text	Not health details	Can be seen or forwarded

If you must email, remove extra details and send only what is needed. Double-check the address before pressing send.

Check the recipient twice

A wrong letter in an email address sends your information to a stranger. Read the address aloud before you hit send.

A simple routine that works

You don't need to be a data expert, just a little organized.

- Wear the watch consistently so trends mean something.
- Keep a small notebook of symptoms and dates.
- Before each visit, build the one-page summary.
- Review who can see your data twice a year.
- Keep your passwords and two-step sign-in current.
- Ask your doctor what they want to see next time.

That is really all it takes. A small habit gives your doctor a better picture and keeps you in control.

★ Make it a habit, not a chore

Pair the review with something you do anyway, like paying a bill. Ten minutes twice a year is plenty.

Common Questions

The questions I hear most about sharing wearable data.

Q: Is my wearable data protected by HIPAA?

In general, no. HIPAA covers your doctor, hospital and insurer. Consumer wearable makers and apps usually have their own privacy policies. Treat app data accordingly, and ask a professional for legal specifics.

Q: Should I send my doctor everything my watch recorded?

Usually not. A short summary and a few relevant records are more useful than a data dump. Ask the office what they prefer.

Q: Can my daughter see my heart readings?

Only if you set up sharing and allow it. Decide what to share, and you can stop at any time.

Q: A caller says my watch detected a problem. What do I do?

Hang up. It is likely a scam. Call your doctor's office or me instead, and never give out a password or code.

Q: What about an alert on my heart rhythm?

See the Heart-Rate, ECG & Afib Alerts on Wearables guide. It is a screening aid, not a diagnosis; bring it to your doctor.

★ Want a second set of eyes?

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and I will check your sharing settings with you.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made sharing wearable health data safely feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I'm a tech helper, not a doctor, an audiologist, or your pharmacist — for a medical question, a hearing test, or anything about your health, I'll gladly help you get set up, but the right professional is the one to answer it, and I'll help you line that person up.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

What Doctors Find Useful

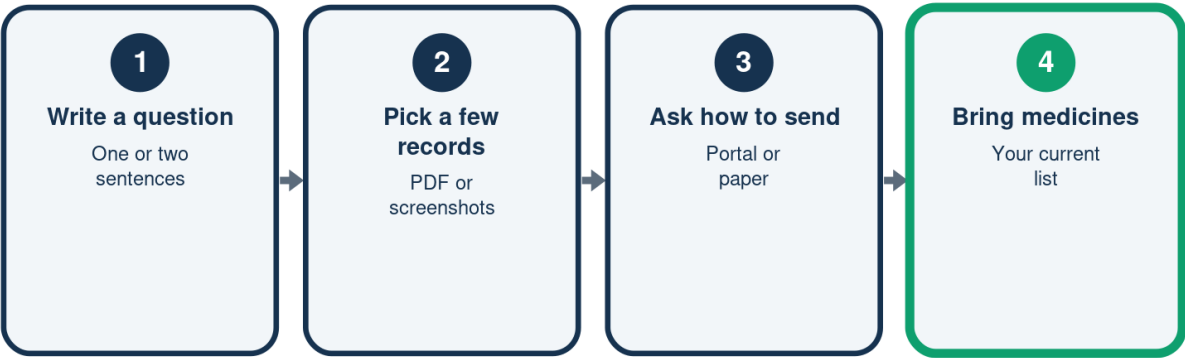
A short picture beats a data dump

	Helpful	Mostly noise
Trends	Weeks of resting	heart rate
Alerts	Saved ECG tied	to a symptom
Notes	Dates, times,	how you felt
Everything	--	Every reading, all day

Bring a question, not a pile.

Before Your Visit

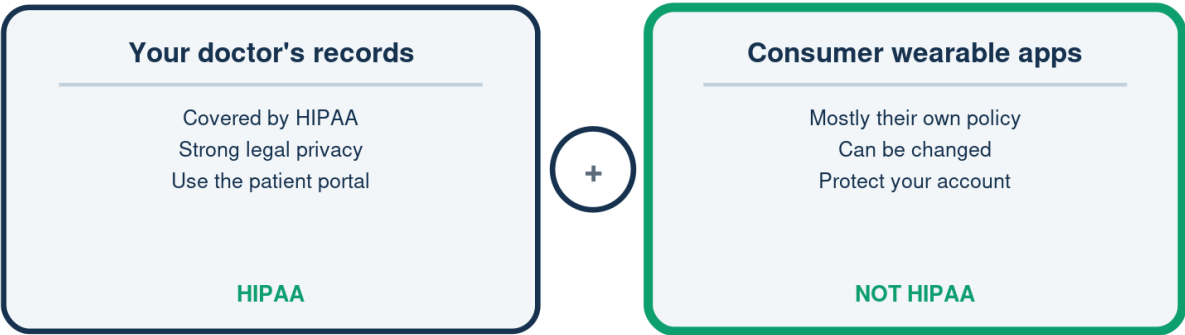
Four steps to a useful summary



Ask the office how they'd like it.

Who Protects Your Data?

Doctors and apps are not held to the same rules



Share the smallest amount that helps -- and guard your login.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.

Who Should See My Data?

You decide, and you can change your mind

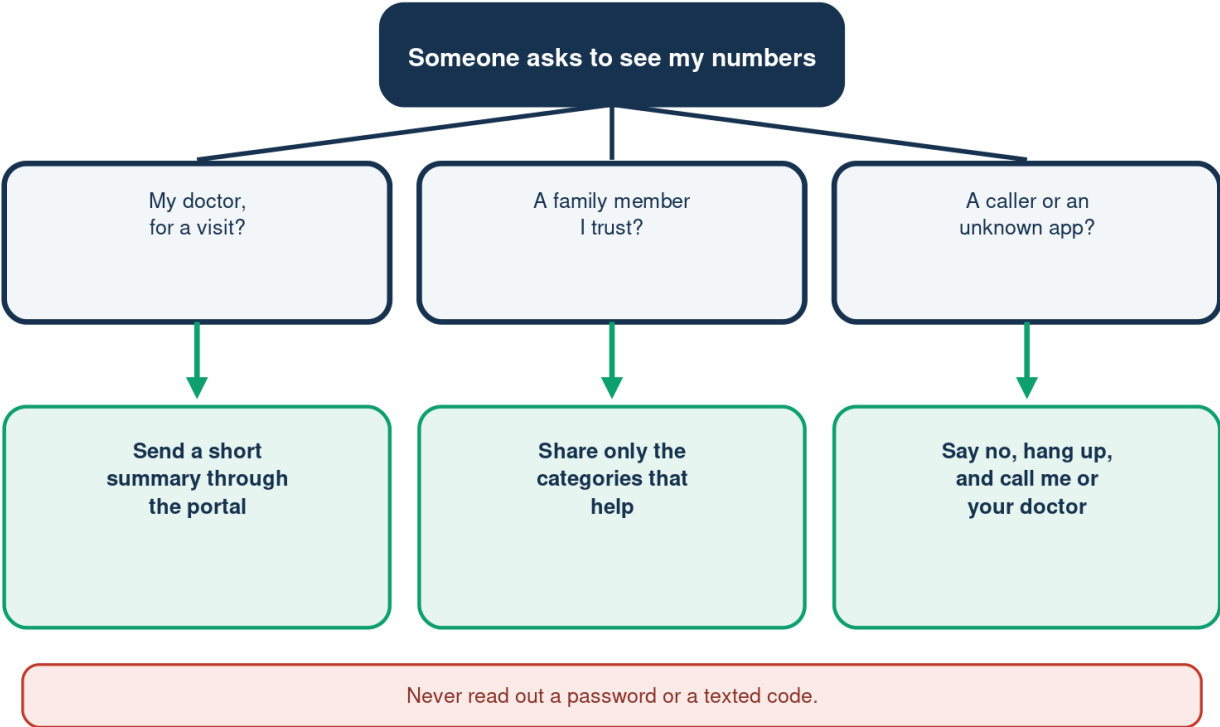


Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



Need a Real Person?

You do not have to remember all of it.
You just have to remember you can call.
Friendly, in-home tech help -- I come to you.

BILL'S PROMISE

If you are not 100% happy with a visit, I will
make it right -- or refund it. No awkwardness,
no fine print. That is how I would want to be treated.

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

— Bill

Prefer help without a visit?

Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



Book a visit —
billshometech.com/book

Use of these guides is subject to our Terms of Use (billshometech.com/terms-of-use).

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

For general information only — not professional advice. Use at your own risk. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech