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EDITORIAL COMMENT

This is a well-designed study that explores the challenge we face in improving fluid intake for our kidney stone patients. The authors offer a patient-centric vantage in defining the barriers to adherence and strategies that might improve them. Various approaches have been used in the past with limited success, but herein lies a unique opportunity to improve behavior by amalgamating input from the patient perspective with currently available technology. As discussed in the paper, external cues or prompts have proven benefit in helping patients improve their fluid intake. However, currently used devices for this purpose such as smart water bottles, have several limitations that preclude consistent use. Perhaps rightfully so, the idea that a wearable device can trigger appropriate fluid intake based on behavioral cues or preprogrammed goals is more appealing, as it gives 1 more freedom and flexibility while providing a more robust platform that can incorporate intake from multiple sources. An important caveat to consider, based on our own ongoing work in this area, is that while digital technology might be appealing, stand-alone devices independent of requisite smartphones might prove to be more inclusive—as we have found many patients such as the elderly do not own or use smartphones. Nonetheless, it is incumbent on the clinician to encourage the use of whatever evidence-based device or tool that can improve adherence and potentially reduce risk of stone recurrence. Some caution should be used in extrapolating data from this specific focus group as participation bias might overlook socioeconomic, age, and cultural barriers; accordingly, it might be helpful to expand this focus group model across sites to capture more diverse perspectives. The main takeaway from this study is that patients are initially motivated, however, currently available resources for kidney stone formers are not sufficient to yield sustainable behavioral modification. Accordingly harnessing smart technology with patient-specific feedback is a logical next step and further development in this area must be encouraged.

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