Medical Devices, Not Drugs, May Become the Gold Standard in Diabetes Treatment

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The use of next-generation technology to help people determine the proper dose of diabetes medicine and track blood sugar levels on the go may be the next big thing in diabetes treatment, The Motley Fool's Industry Focus: Healthcare podcast reports.

For the story, financial analysts Kristine Harjes and Gaby Lapera discussed the rise of continuous glucose monitors, or CGMs, gadgets that can be inserted under the skin to constantly monitor a person's blood sugar. Other types of diabetes treatment devices, such as insulin pumps, can be programmed to automatically administer insulin to control blood sugar levels.

Several companies are currently making devices to help manage diabetes, such as San Diego–based DexCom. The company created a new implant that allows people living with diabetes to chart their blood sugar over time. According to the drug company, this tool is important because it can ultimately allow diabetics to better control their condition and delay the progression of the disease and cardiovascular risks during a period of time.

Livongo, another consumer digital health company, based in Mountain View, California, aims to monitor chronic conditions, such as diabetes, remotely, via a connected device that sends data to doctors for analysis. The company also has a staff of diabetes coaches available for support and monitoring.

"You get companies that are coming into this space because they recognize that there's a huge unmet need," Harjes said during the podcast. "They're really changing the way that we treat this disease and the lives of the people that have to manage it every single day."

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