

Using Apps to Support Your Health

iCON Digital Health Literacy, 2023-2024



Acknowledgements

This digital health literacy curriculum was developed by The University of British Columbia's interCultural Online health Network (iCON).

iCON is supported by the B.C. Ministry of Health's *Patients as Partners* initiative.

iCON has been working with multicultural communities for over 10 years.

iCON helps people with chronic disease self-management.

iCON also helps people develop digital literacy in order to access, assess, and use health resources online.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Department of Emergency Medicine
Faculty of Medicine

Thank you to the BC Ministry of Health Patients as Partners Initiative for their support.

Learning Objectives

- Understand what apps are and how they can be used to manage your health.
- Understand how to choose good quality apps.
- Learn how to install and set up apps.

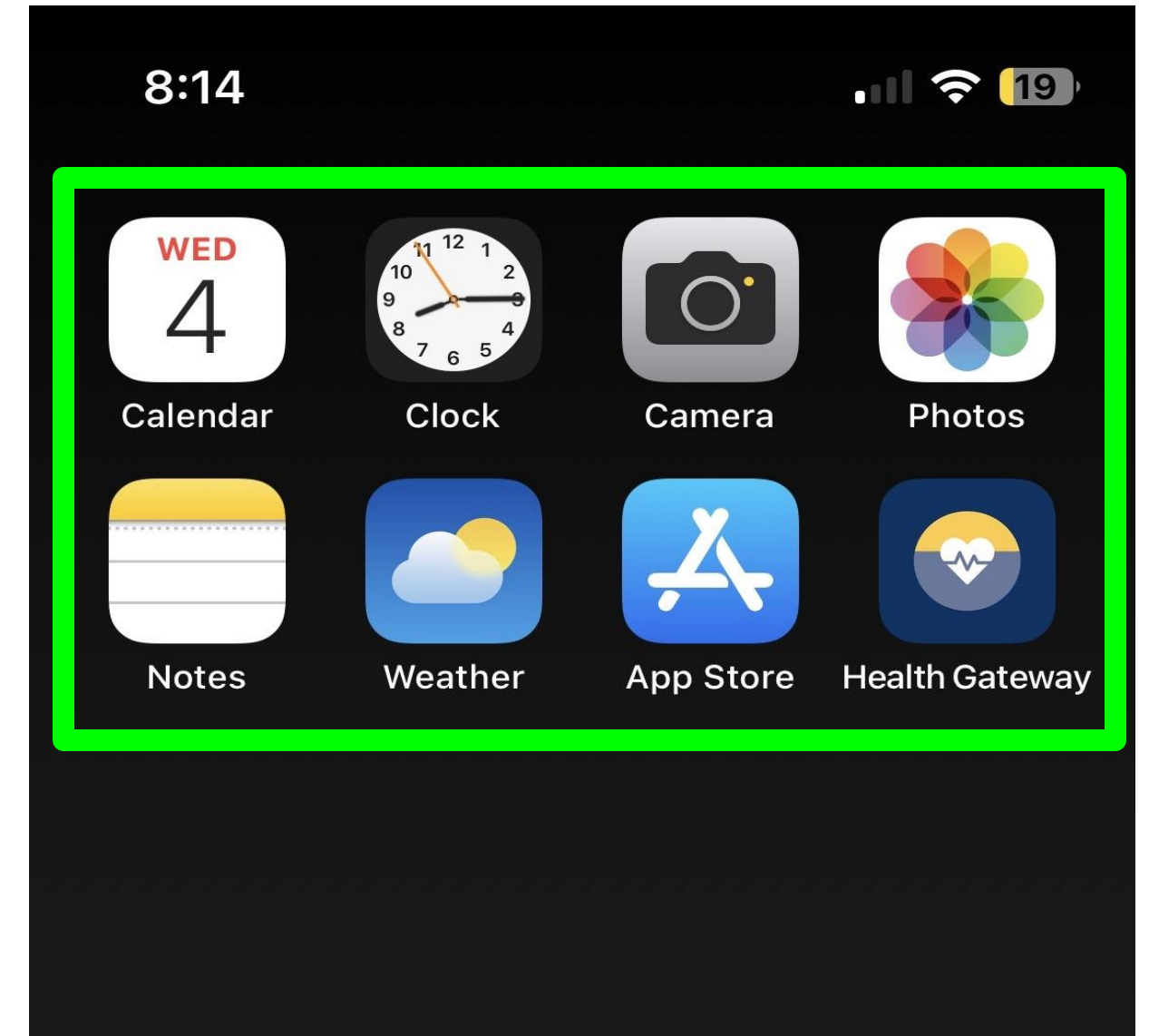


What is an app?

What is an app?

- When you use your smartphone, you will notice that upon unlocking your device, it usually displays a screen with several small icons. These icons are referred to as apps, which is the short form for applications.

What is an app?



- Usually, each of your apps is displayed on your screen as an icon and the name of each app appears right below it.

What is an app?

- Apps are like mini computer programs. They are tools to help you use your smartphone.
- Apps make it possible to use your device for many different tasks, such as: writing notes, taking and viewing photos, browsing the web, reading the news, texting, audio and video calling, and more.

What types of apps are available?

There are many apps available. While each one has a unique interface and different features, a lot of these apps can be categorized depending on the main function they help you perform. Some categories of apps include:

- Communication
- Utilities
- Entertainment
- Health
- And more...

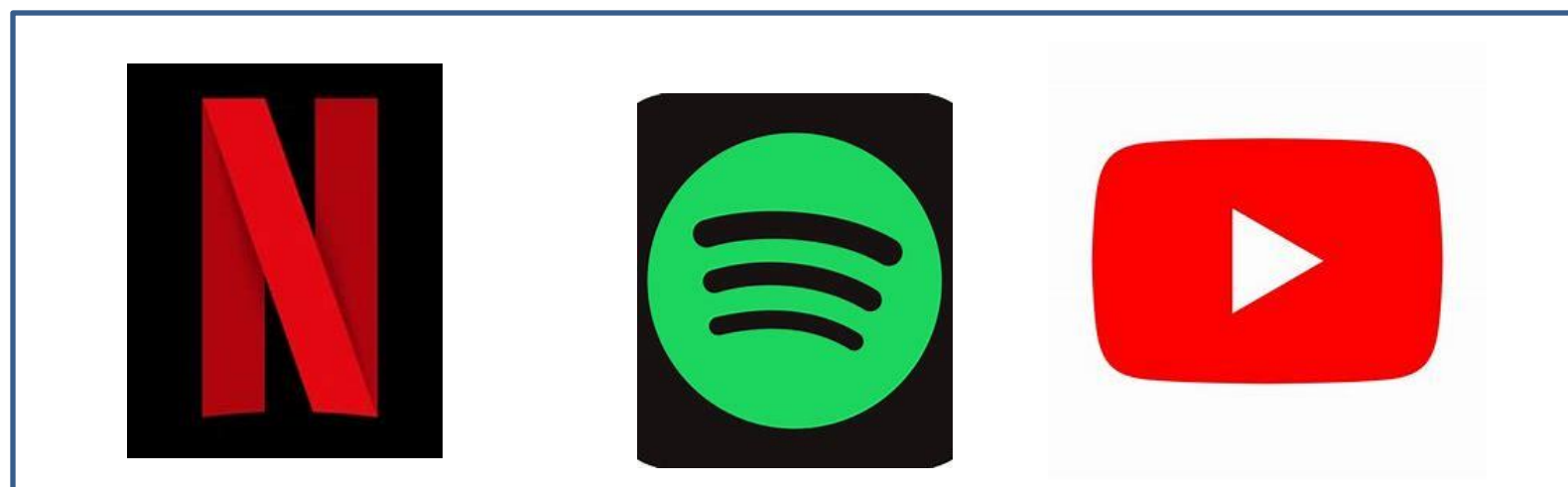
What types of apps are available?



Communication apps



Utilities apps



Entertainment apps



Health apps

How apps can support your health

How apps can support your health

Apps can support your health in several ways:

- By acting like health information tools, which assist in self-management of your health and chronic conditions.
- By providing easier access to your healthcare provider through telemedicine and secure messaging apps.

How apps can support your health

Health apps provide a wide range of services. There are two main types of apps that can support your health:

- Apps to help you to self-manage your health and wellness
- Apps to access health care and view your personal health information

When could health apps be used?



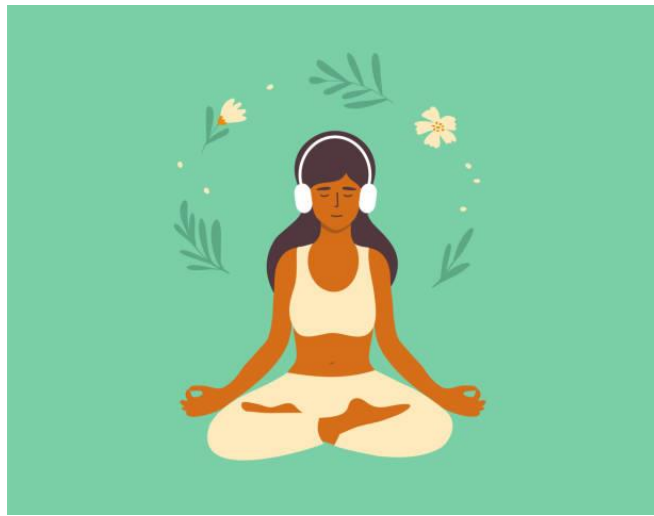
PATIENT			
Patient's Name			
Status			
Date Of Birth			
Register Number			
Phone			
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female			
REQUESTING HOSPITAL			
Hospital Name			
Ward		Unit/Firm	
Clinician			
Clinician's e-mail/Phone			
SPECIMEN DETAILS			
Request Date		Specimen Collection Date	
Collected By		Specimen Collection Time	
LABORATORY REQUEST			
DECKWONE	TELEOR MARKER	CARDIAC MARKER	ALLERGY PROFILE
<input type="checkbox"/> Beta HCG	<input type="checkbox"/> AFP	<input type="checkbox"/> Brain Natriuretic Peptide (BNP)	<input type="checkbox"/> IgE level
<input type="checkbox"/> Cortisol	<input type="checkbox"/> CEA	<input type="checkbox"/> CK-MB	<input type="checkbox"/> Allergy screening for food allergen
<input type="checkbox"/> C-Peptide	<input type="checkbox"/> CA15-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Hemocrit	<input type="checkbox"/> Allergy screening for inhalation allergen
<input type="checkbox"/> Estradiol (E2)	<input type="checkbox"/> CA19-9	<input type="checkbox"/> NT-proBNP	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific IgE for... (Phad10)
<input type="checkbox"/> FSH	<input type="checkbox"/> CA242	<input type="checkbox"/> Troponin-I	<input type="checkbox"/> Bermuda grass
<input type="checkbox"/> Growth hormone	<input type="checkbox"/> PSA	<input type="checkbox"/> Troponin-T	<input type="checkbox"/> Johnson grass
<input type="checkbox"/> IGF-1	<input type="checkbox"/> Free PSA	<input type="checkbox"/> C-Reactive Protein (high sensitive)	<input type="checkbox"/> Buckwheat
<input type="checkbox"/> IGF2R3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ferritin	<input type="checkbox"/> HEPATITIS MARKER	<input type="checkbox"/> Cocksfoot
<input type="checkbox"/> Inhibin	<input type="checkbox"/> Ferritin	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis A virus IgG	<input type="checkbox"/> Cow's milk
<input type="checkbox"/> LH	<input type="checkbox"/> ANA	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis A virus IgM	<input type="checkbox"/> Crab
<input type="checkbox"/> Parathyroid hormone (intact)	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-dsDNA	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B surface antigen	<input type="checkbox"/> Dog dander
<input type="checkbox"/> Progesterone	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Sm (Anti-Sm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B surface antibody	<input type="checkbox"/> Egg white
<input type="checkbox"/> Progesterone	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti mitochondrion (AMA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B core antibody	<input type="checkbox"/> Egg yolk
<input type="checkbox"/> Testosterone	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-nRP	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B core IgM	<input type="checkbox"/> Wheat
<input type="checkbox"/> Free testosterone	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-LKM	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis Be antigen	<input type="checkbox"/> Dermatophagoides fenniae (D2)
<input type="checkbox"/> Thyroid Stimulating Hormone	<input type="checkbox"/> Complement C3	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis Be antibody	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed food
<input type="checkbox"/> Thyroxine (T4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complement C4	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis E virus IgG	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed grass
<input type="checkbox"/> Thyroxine Free (Free T4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Hypocretin (Anti TRG)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis E virus IgM	<input type="checkbox"/> Phad10
<input type="checkbox"/> Thyroxine Free (Free T4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Hypocretin (Anti TRG)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis E virus IgG	<input type="checkbox"/> Other allergen
<input type="checkbox"/> Erythropoietin (EPO)	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti Smooth Muscle (ASM)	<input type="checkbox"/> HEMATOLOGY & COAGULATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> CRP	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin A (Retinol)	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-OH Vitamin D2&D3
<input type="checkbox"/> Aspartate Aminotransferase (Aspartate)	<input type="checkbox"/> Diphenhydramine	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)	<input type="checkbox"/> Glutathione
<input type="checkbox"/> Benzodiazepine	<input type="checkbox"/> Valproic acid (Divalproex)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Coenzyme Q10 (Ubiquinone)
<input type="checkbox"/> Phenylephrine	<input type="checkbox"/> Amoxicillin (Thiopyline)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine)	<input type="checkbox"/> Miconazole
<input type="checkbox"/> Valproic acid (Divalproex)	<input type="checkbox"/> Valproic acid (Divalproex)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin C	<input type="checkbox"/> Beta Carotene
<input type="checkbox"/> Carbamazepine (Tegretol)	<input type="checkbox"/> Amoxicillin (Thiopyline)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin E (Tocopherol)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cyclosporin	<input type="checkbox"/> Cyclosporin		
		Receiving Date	
		Initials	



When could health apps be used?



How can apps support your health?



Mental health



Medication management



Sleep



Exercise

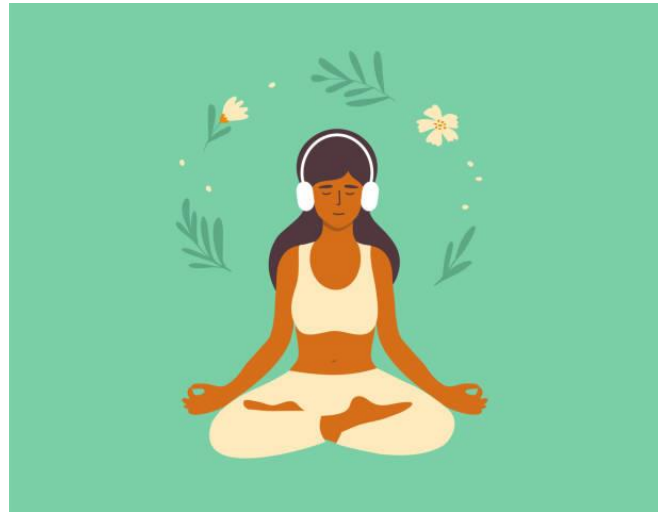


Health tracking



Access to care

How can apps support your health?



Mental health

Mental health apps allow you to take a more proactive approach to your mental well-being. By giving you access to resources, they can support you to track your mental state, regulate your thoughts and emotions as well as assist in managing mental health issues.



Medication management

Medication management apps support you to keep track of your medication and prescriptions by providing reminders to help with medication adherence.

How can apps support your health?



Sleep

Sleep management apps are designed to help you improve the quality and duration of your sleep. These apps enhance your sleep by using features to track and monitor your sleep patterns.



Exercise

Exercise apps support you in maintaining an active lifestyle by tracking your progress and improving your physical health.

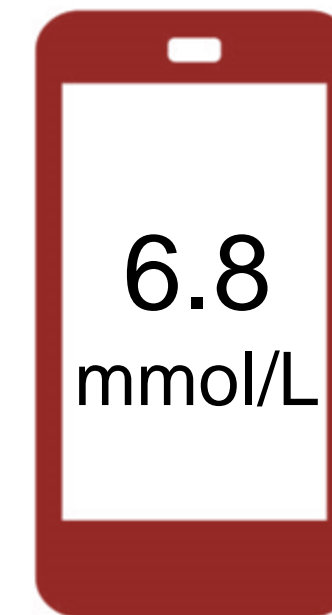
How can apps support your health?



Health tracking

Health tracking apps are designed to help you monitor and manage your chronic conditions. They encourage you to practice preventative care by assisting you in maintaining your health and wellness and by fostering positive self-management skills.

For example, individuals living with diabetes may use apps that monitor their blood glucose, such as apps for continuous glucose monitoring (CGM).



How apps can support your health

Health apps provide a wide range of services. There are two main types of apps that can support your health:

- Apps to help you to self-manage your health and wellness
- Apps to access health care and view your personal health information

How do health apps help you access care?

Health apps may allow you to access care as some healthcare providers:



Access to care

- Use secure portal apps as a confidential messaging system with their patients.
- Facilitate virtual care by allowing you to schedule and access some types of healthcare appointments.
- May share information on health services near your location that you can access.

How apps can support your health

An example of an app that allows you to view your personal health information is Health Gateway, which is developed by the B.C. provincial government. Through Health Gateway, you can access your:

- Health and hospital visits
- Medications
- Lab results
- Immunization history
- COVID-19 proof of vaccination
- And more...

Precautions when using health apps

- Often apps access your location or other data to track your progress to function optimally. You should be cautious when sharing any sensitive information while using apps.
- Continual learning is helpful as apps gain new features and/or are updated.

Tips for choosing a quality app

Choosing a quality app

There are a wide variety of apps available, with varying levels of trustworthiness, quality, and functions. You can make an informed decision about which app to use by taking these measures:

- Choosing trusted apps
- Being careful about sharing sensitive information
- Selecting apps that meet your goals

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Choosing trusted apps

More trustworthy:  

Less trustworthy:  

Choosing trusted apps

More trustworthy:



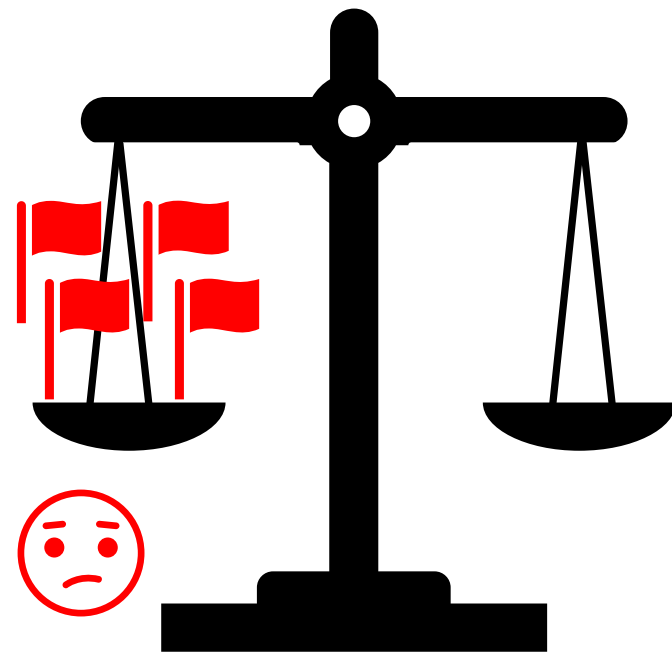
- Designed by a reputable organization.
- Has been downloaded by many users and has many positive reviews.
- Does not try to sell you a product or service.
- Clearly explains how your information will be protected through a privacy policy.

Less trustworthy:



- Not designed by a reputable organization.
- Has been downloaded by a small number of users and has many negative reviews.
- Tries to sell you a product or service.
- Is not clear about how your information will be protected, and may not have a privacy policy.

Choosing trusted apps



Less
trustworthy



May or may not
be trustworthy

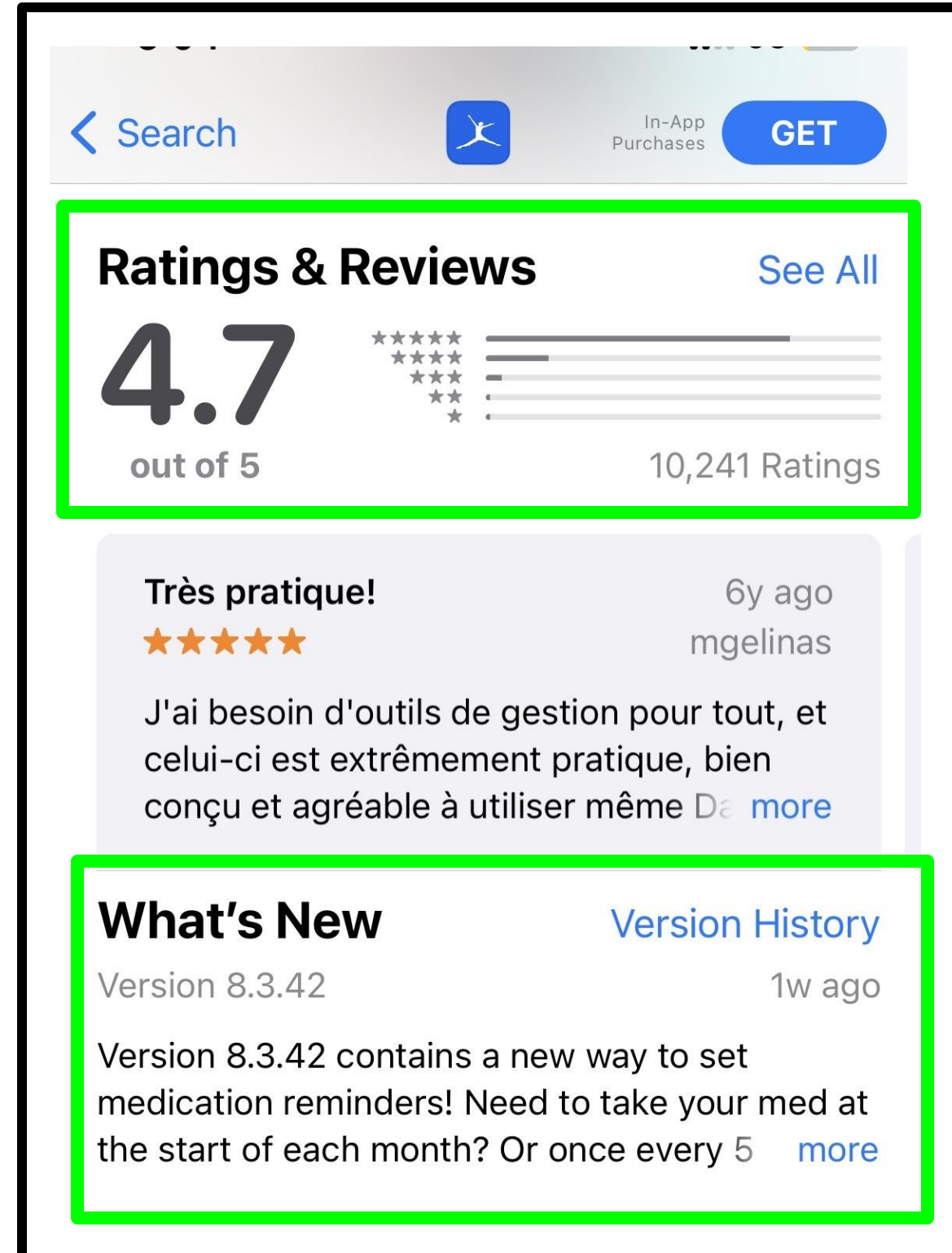


More
trustworthy


Green Flags  : more trustworthy. 

Red Flags  : less trustworthy. 

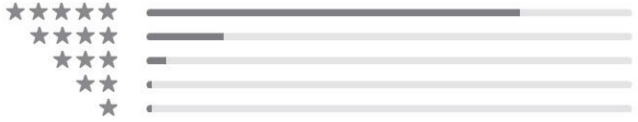
Choosing trusted apps



The screenshot shows an app page with several sections highlighted in green. At the top, there is a search bar, an app icon, and a 'GET' button. The 'Ratings & Reviews' section is highlighted, showing a 4.7 rating out of 5 based on 10,241 ratings. Below this is a review from 'mgelinas' dated '6y ago' with a 5-star rating. The 'What's New' section is also highlighted, showing version 8.3.42 from '1w ago' with a description of new medication reminder features. To the right of the screenshot, there are three green icons: a flag at the top, a smiley face in the middle, and another flag at the bottom.

< Search  In-App Purchases GET

Ratings & Reviews [See All](#)

4.7 
out of 5 10,241 Ratings

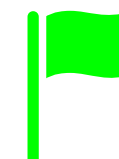
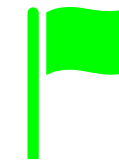
Très pratique! 6y ago
★★★★★ mgelinas

J'ai besoin d'outils de gestion pour tout, et celui-ci est extrêmement pratique, bien conçu et agréable à utiliser même [De more](#)

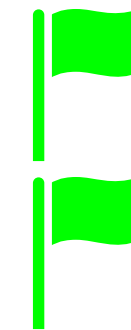
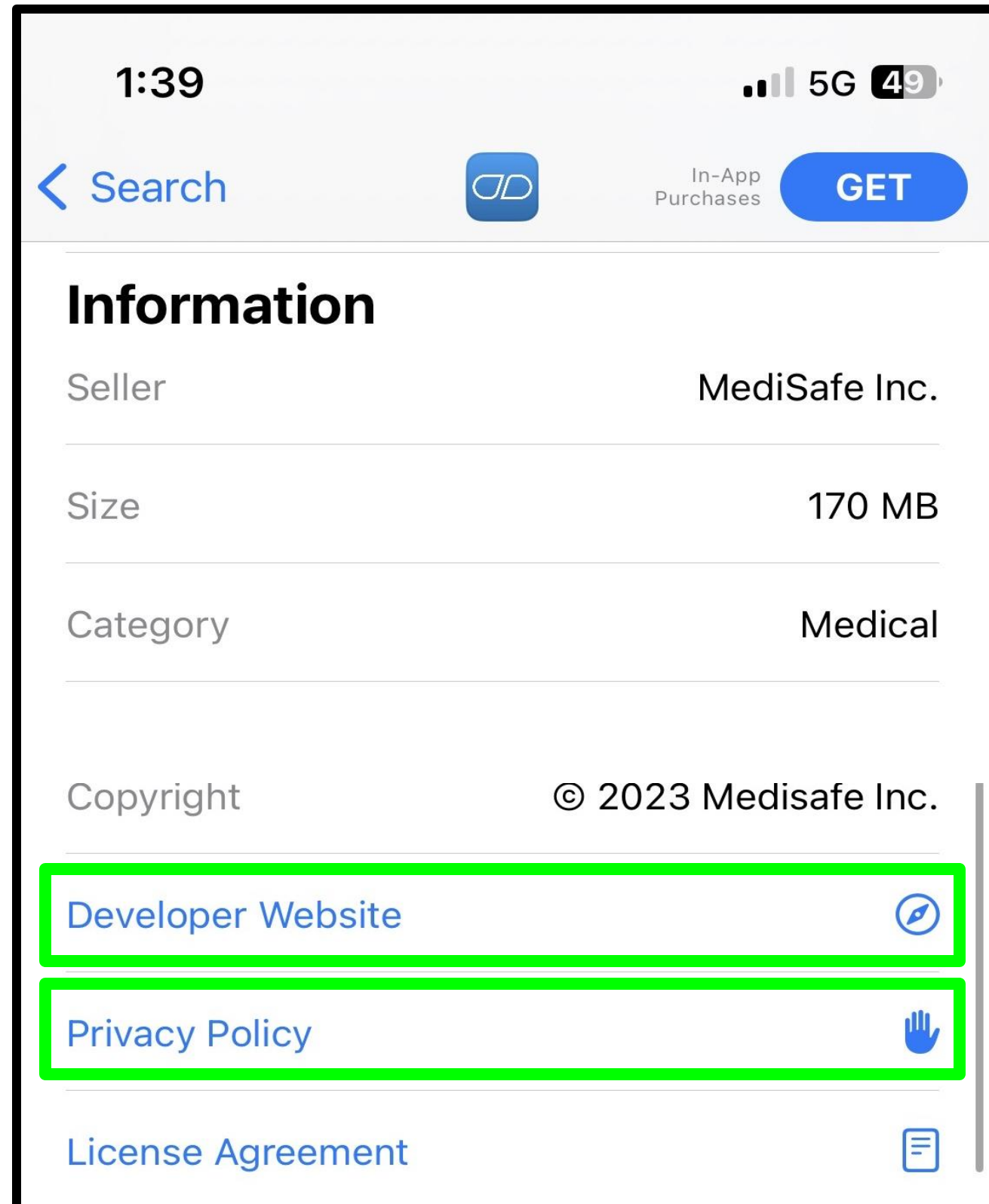
What's New [Version History](#)

Version 8.3.42 1w ago

Version 8.3.42 contains a new way to set medication reminders! Need to take your med at the start of each month? Or once every 5 [more](#)



Choosing trusted apps



Choosing a quality app

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- Choosing trusted apps
- Being careful about sharing sensitive information
- Selecting apps that meet your goals

Sharing sensitive information

Be cautious if you are asked to share sensitive information, such as:

- Date of birth
- Address
- Personal Health Number (PHN)
- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- Identification documents, such as passport or driver's license
- Personal financial information

Choosing a quality app

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- Selecting apps that meet your goals

Selecting apps that meet your goals



Endorsed by
someone you trust



Meets your health
needs



Limits the request for
sensitive information



Available in a language
you are comfortable using



Minimizes the sharing of
outdated information

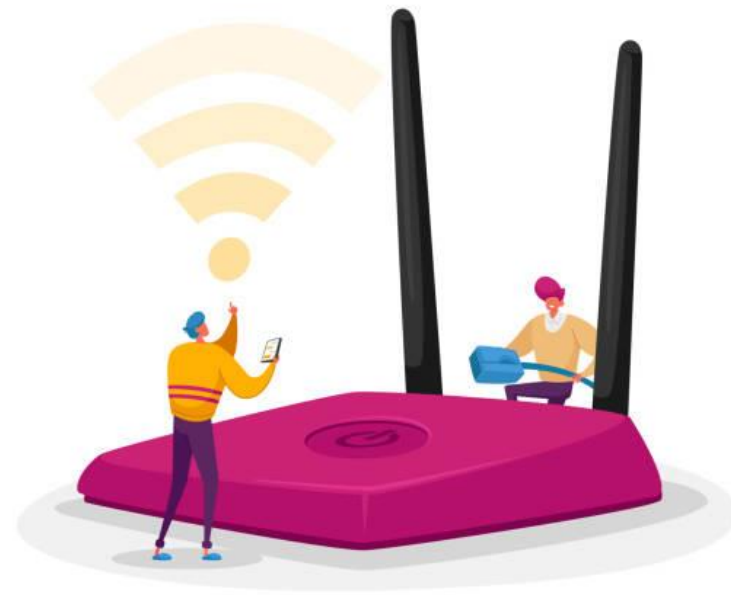
Installing apps

Installing apps

- Usually, apps that help you perform basic functions on your device will come pre-installed when you purchase the device.
- You also have the option of installing new apps on your phone.

How to install apps

- To install an app, your smartphone needs to be connected to the internet.



How to install apps

- If there is an app you want to install, you can go to the app store on your smartphone.



App Store

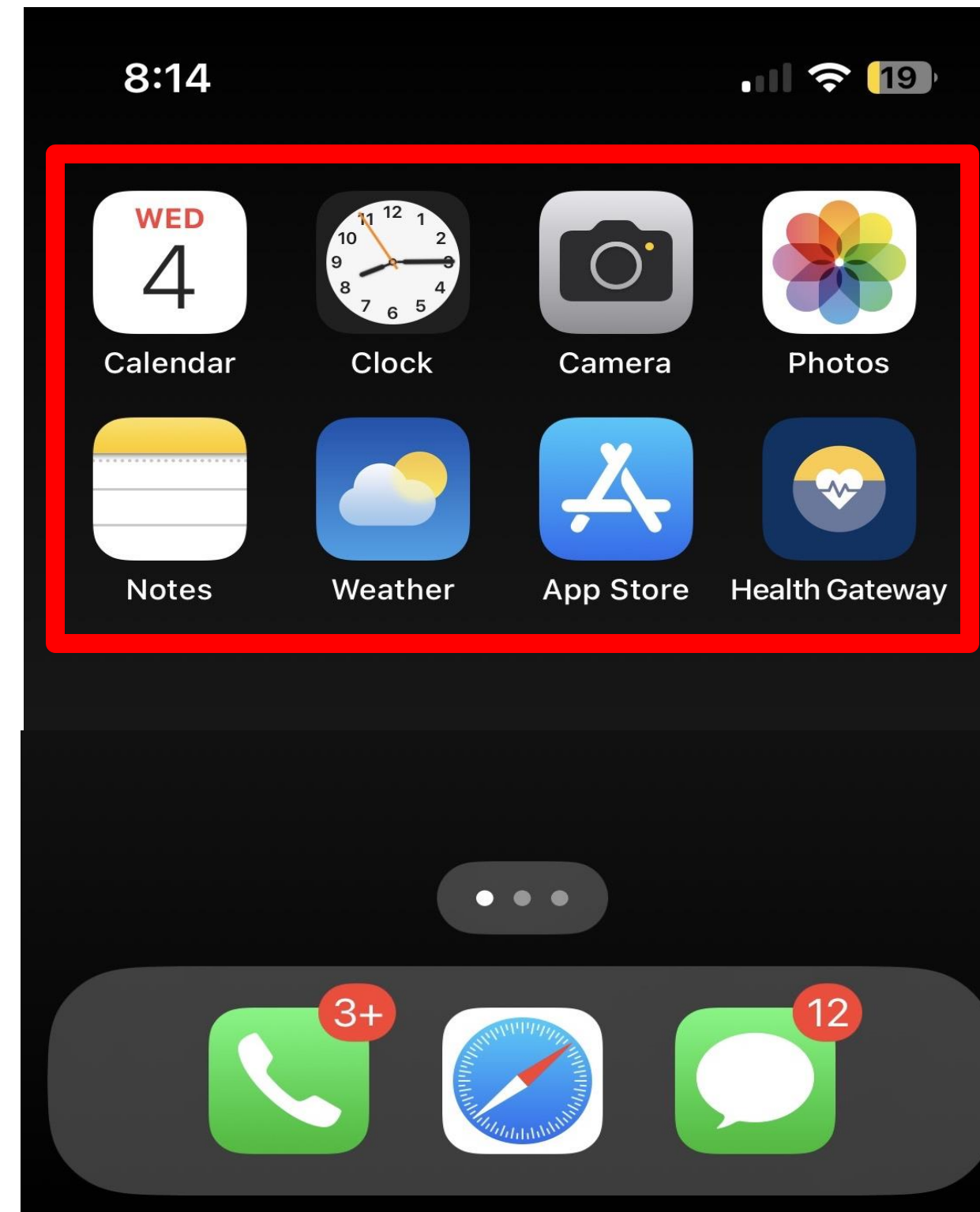
App marketplace by Apple

Google Play

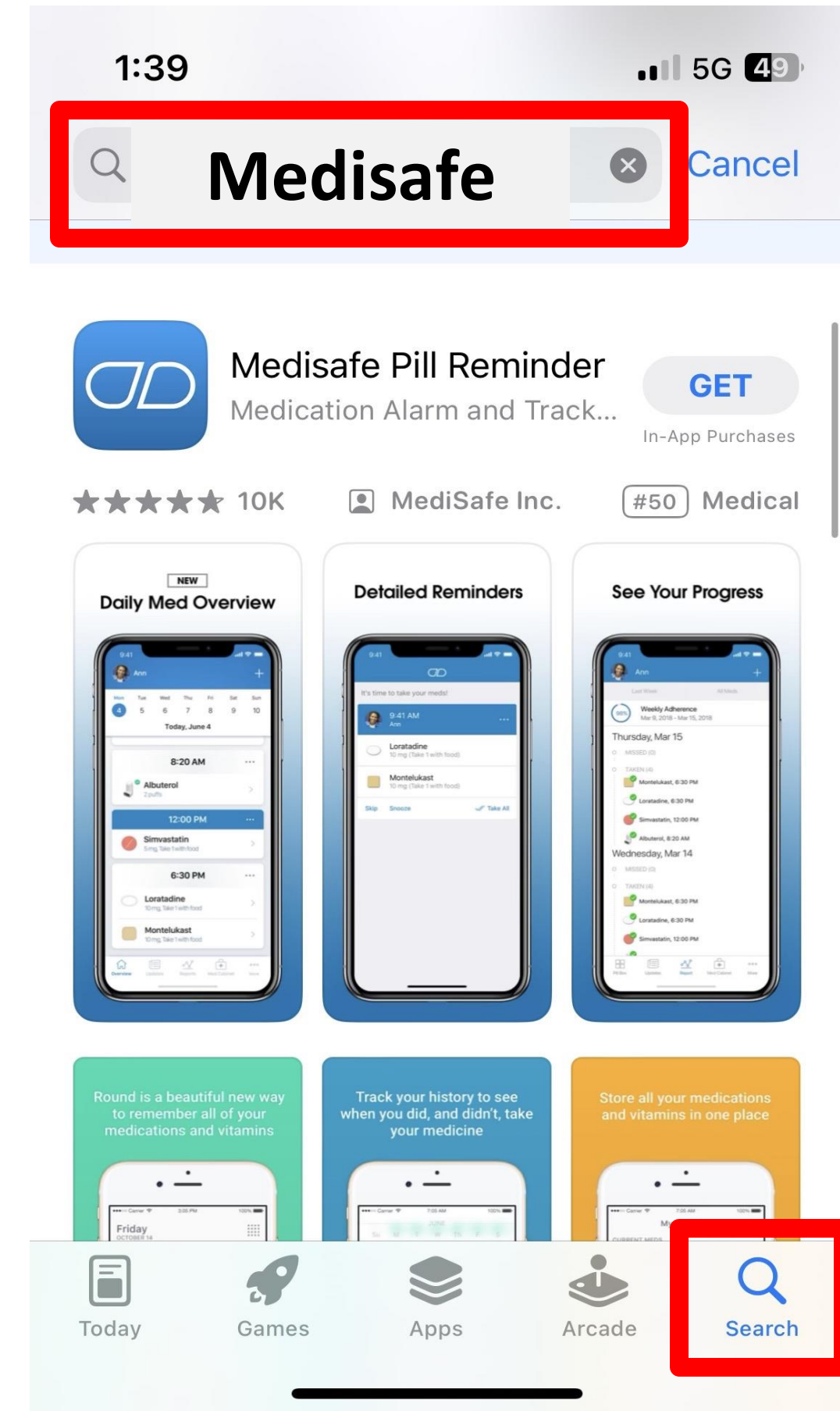
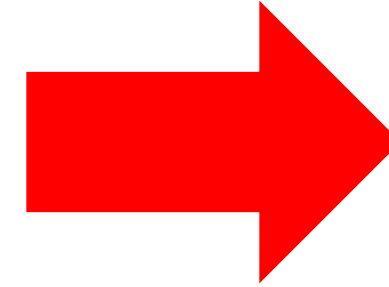
Digital distribution service



How to install apps



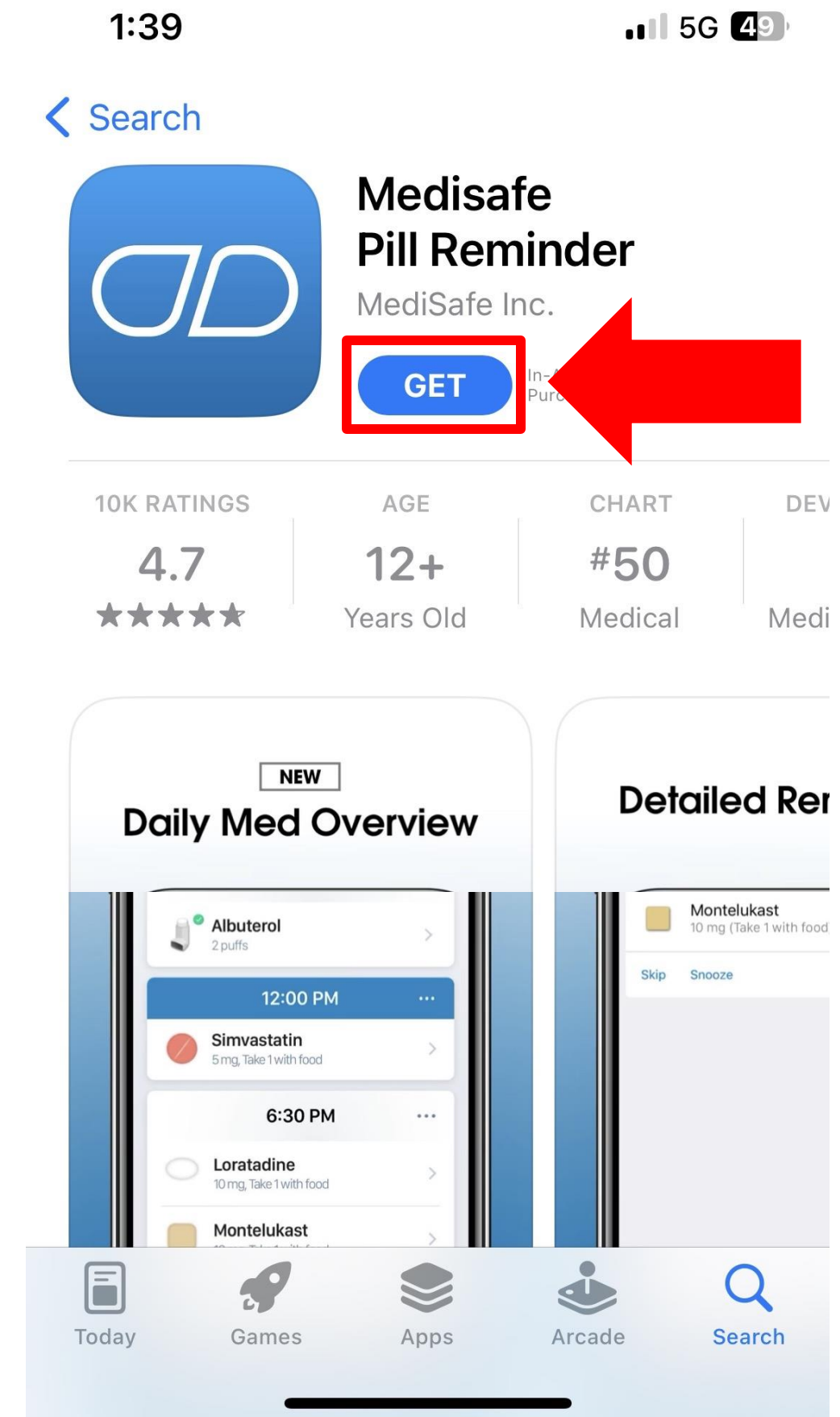
How to install apps



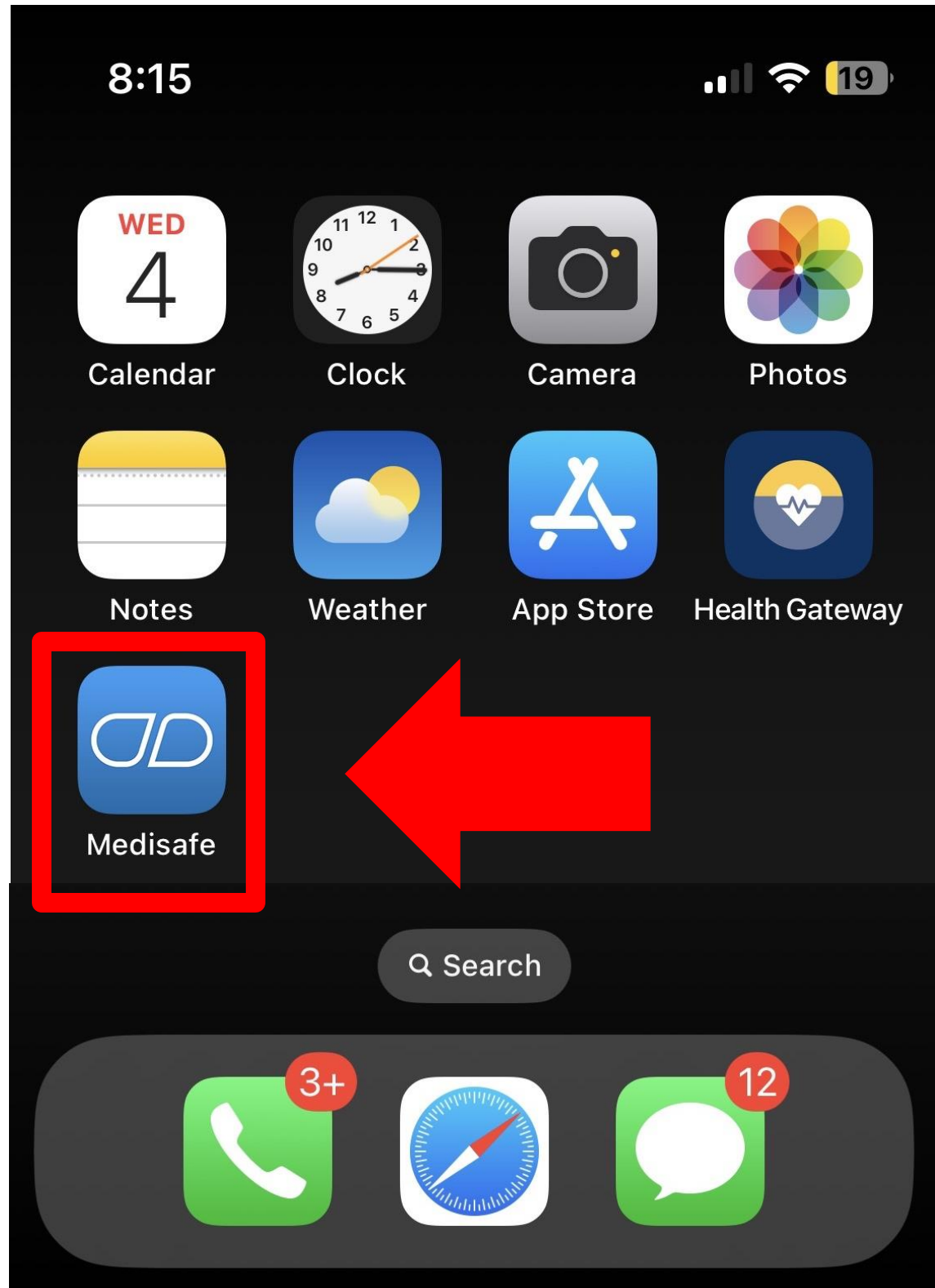
In the search bar, type the name of the app you wish to install.

How to install apps

Select “Get” or “Install” to start downloading the app on to your device. Your device may prompt you to confirm installation.



How to install apps



After you install the app, you can open it by tapping on it from your home screen.

Using apps

Using apps: Setting up your app

Usually, the first time you use an app, it will prompt you to set up the app including creating an account and indicating your preferences. This may include:

- Notification preferences
- Permissions and restrictions preferences
- Language preferences

Using apps: Setting up your account

- Typically, when you are using health related apps, it may require you to set up the app in order to tailor it to your needs. This may include inputting some personal identifying information, such as your name and date of birth.
- If the app prompts you to provide information, it is good practice to assess if it is safe to provide the information or ask someone you trust to verify.

Using apps: Creating a strong password

To create a strong password, follow these tips:

- Try to make a password that cannot be easily guessed (avoid including personal information).
- Use different passwords on different account and devices.
- Keep your password private.
- Use a minimum of 15 characters.
- Use a combination of upper and lower case letters.
- Include at least one number and one character, like !, # or \$.

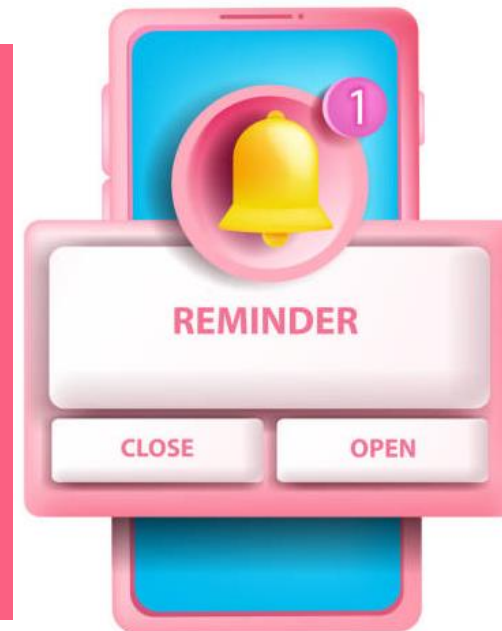
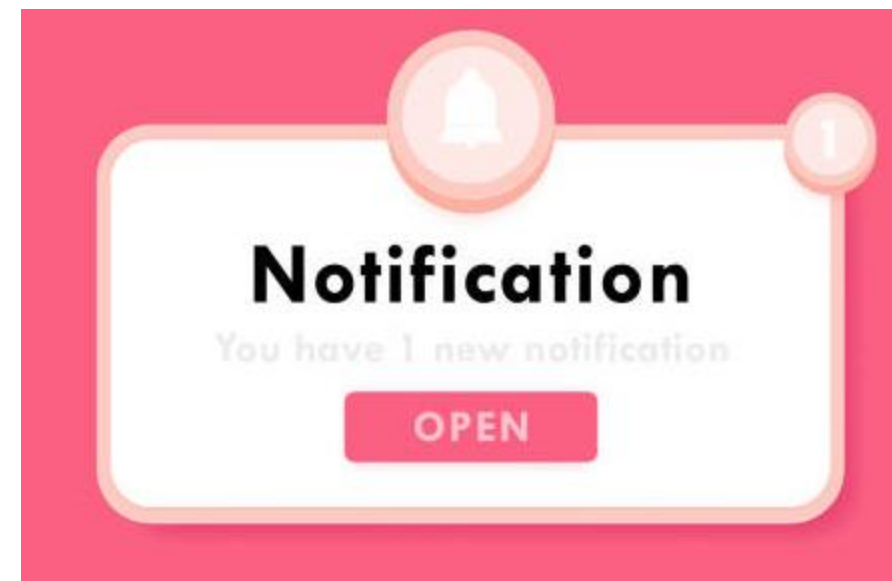
Using apps: Setting up your app

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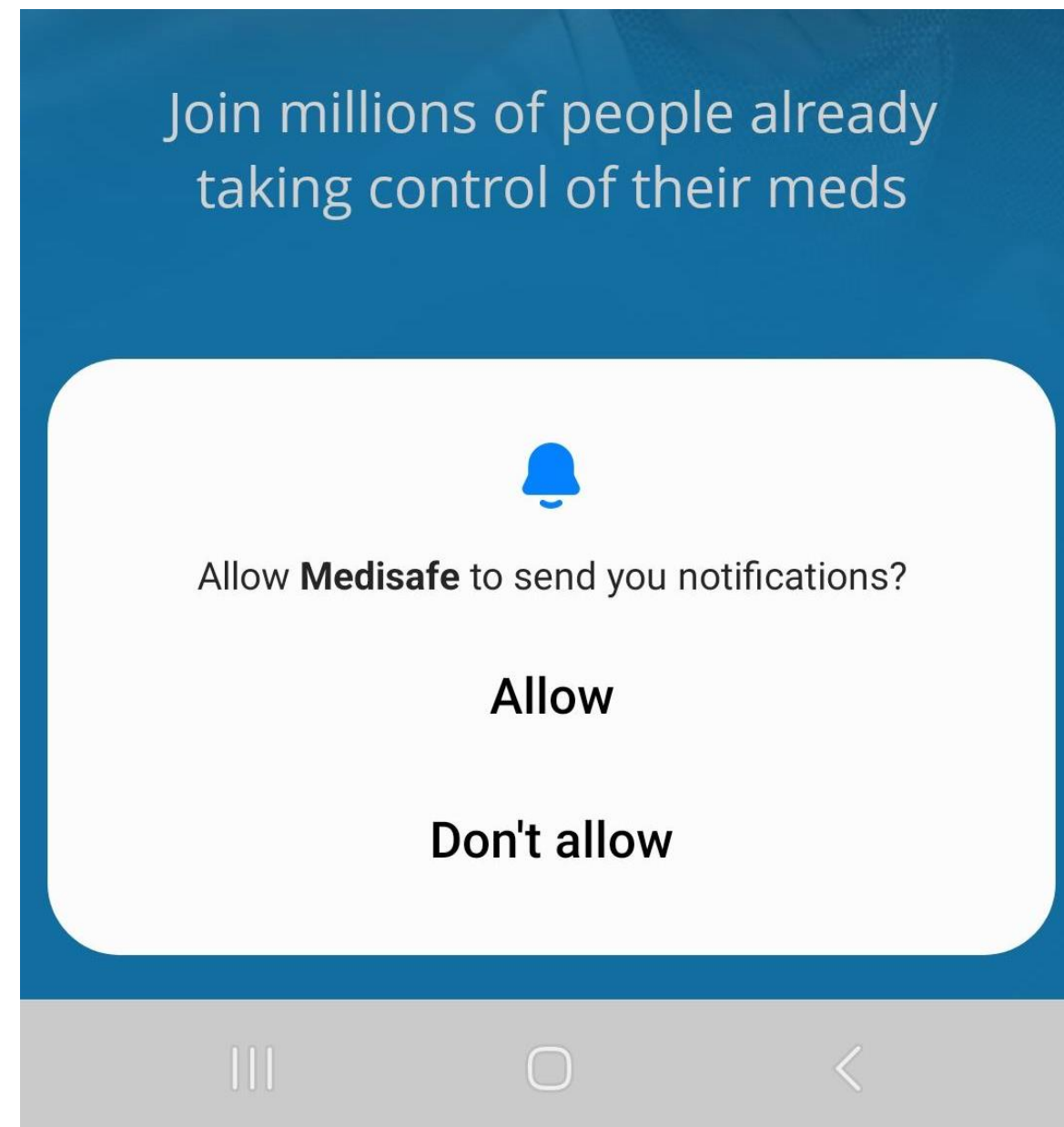
- Notification preferences
- Permissions and restrictions preferences
- Language preferences

Using apps: Notification preferences

- Notification preferences is a way for you to set up your apps so that you can choose the type of alerts you receive from any app. Your notification preferences can vary between apps.



Using apps: Notification preferences



Using apps: Setting up your app

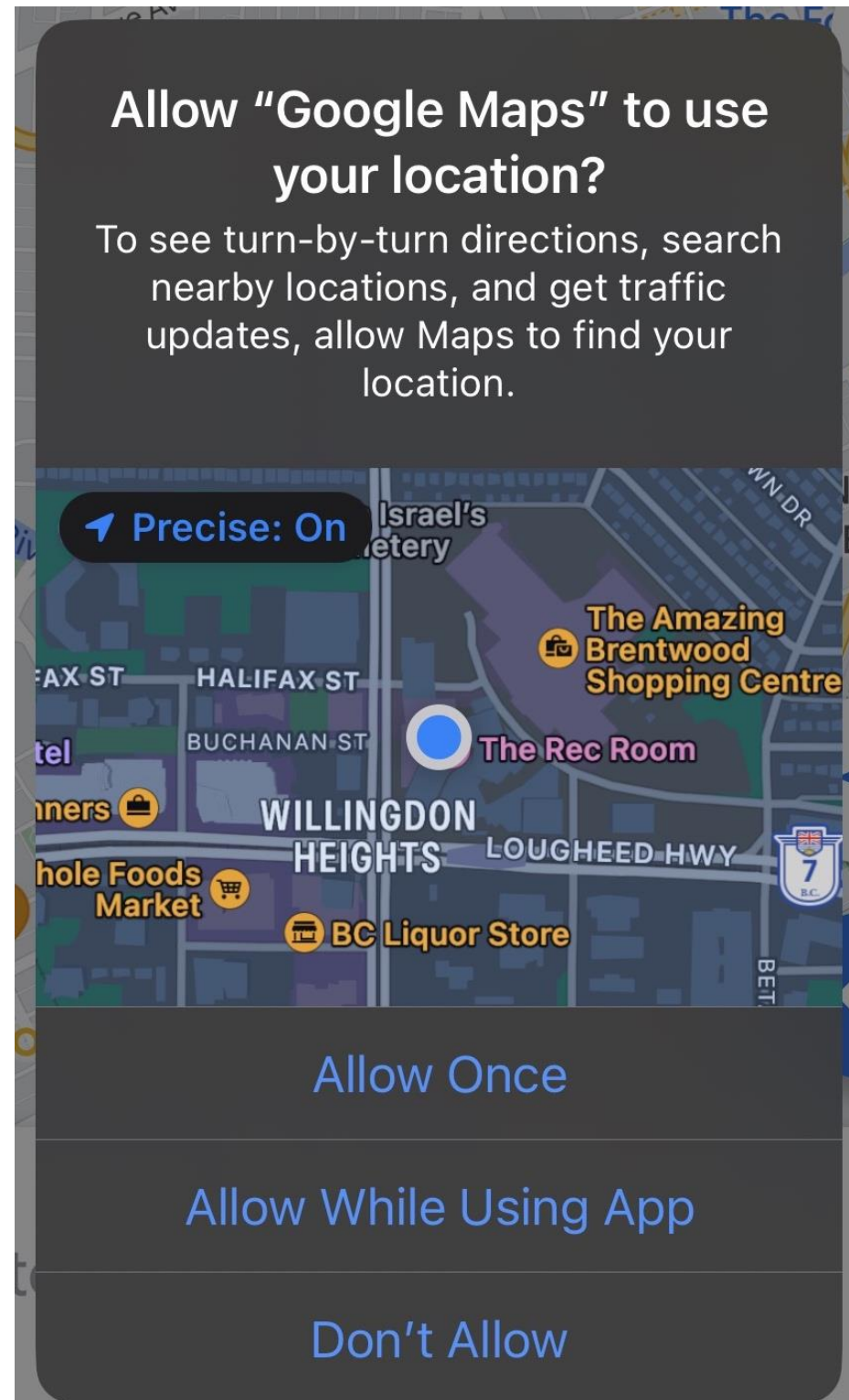
Usually, the first time you use an app, it will prompt you to set up the app including creating an account and indicating your preferences. This may include:

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- Permissions and restrictions preferences
- Language preferences

Using apps: Permissions and restrictions preferences

- In some instances, apps might require access to specific features on your phone to perform its intended functions optimally. For example, your maps app might ask for permission to access your location to show you the best route.
- When they require permission, the app will send you a notification which you can allow or deny.

Using apps: Permissions and restrictions preferences



Using apps: Setting up your app

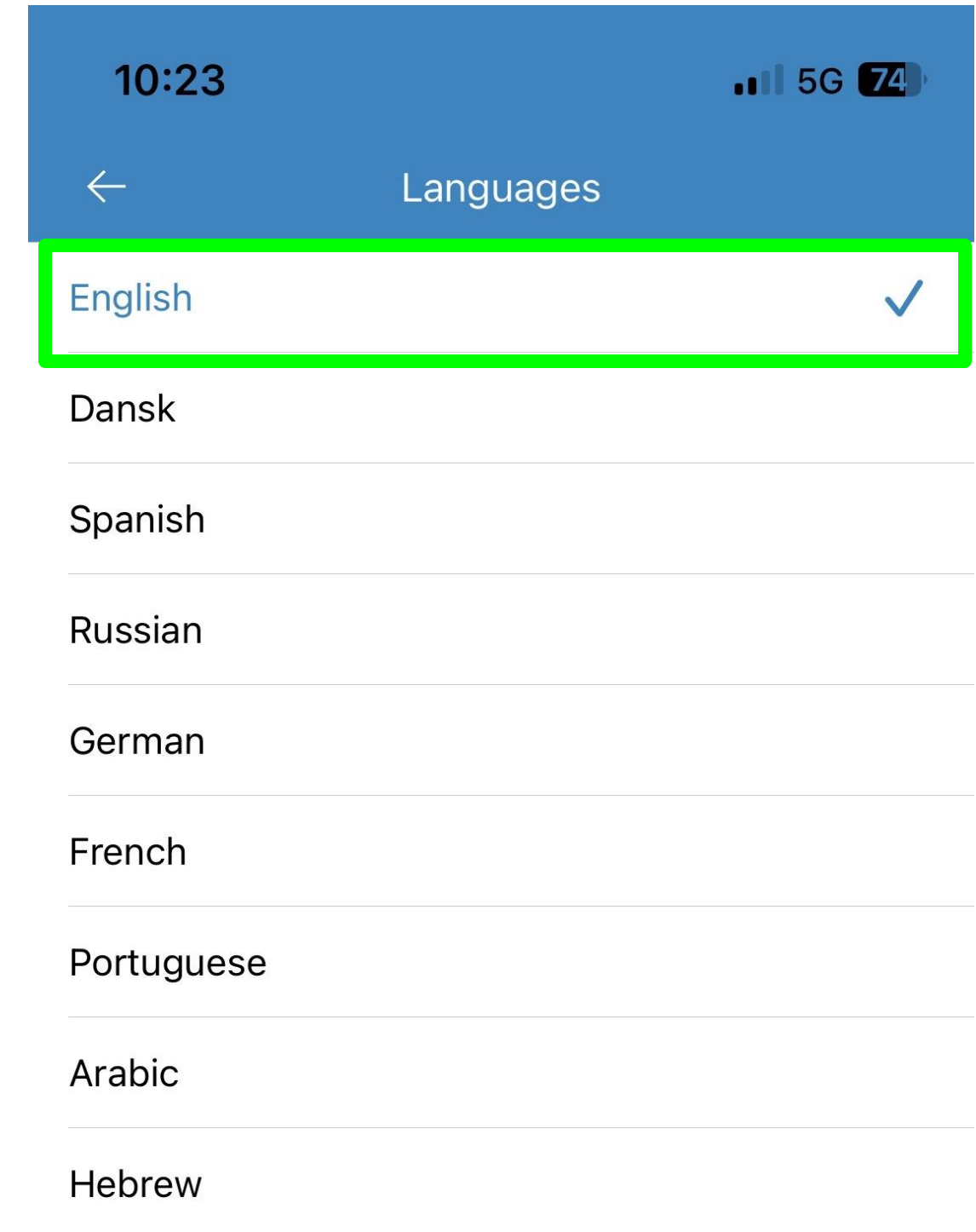
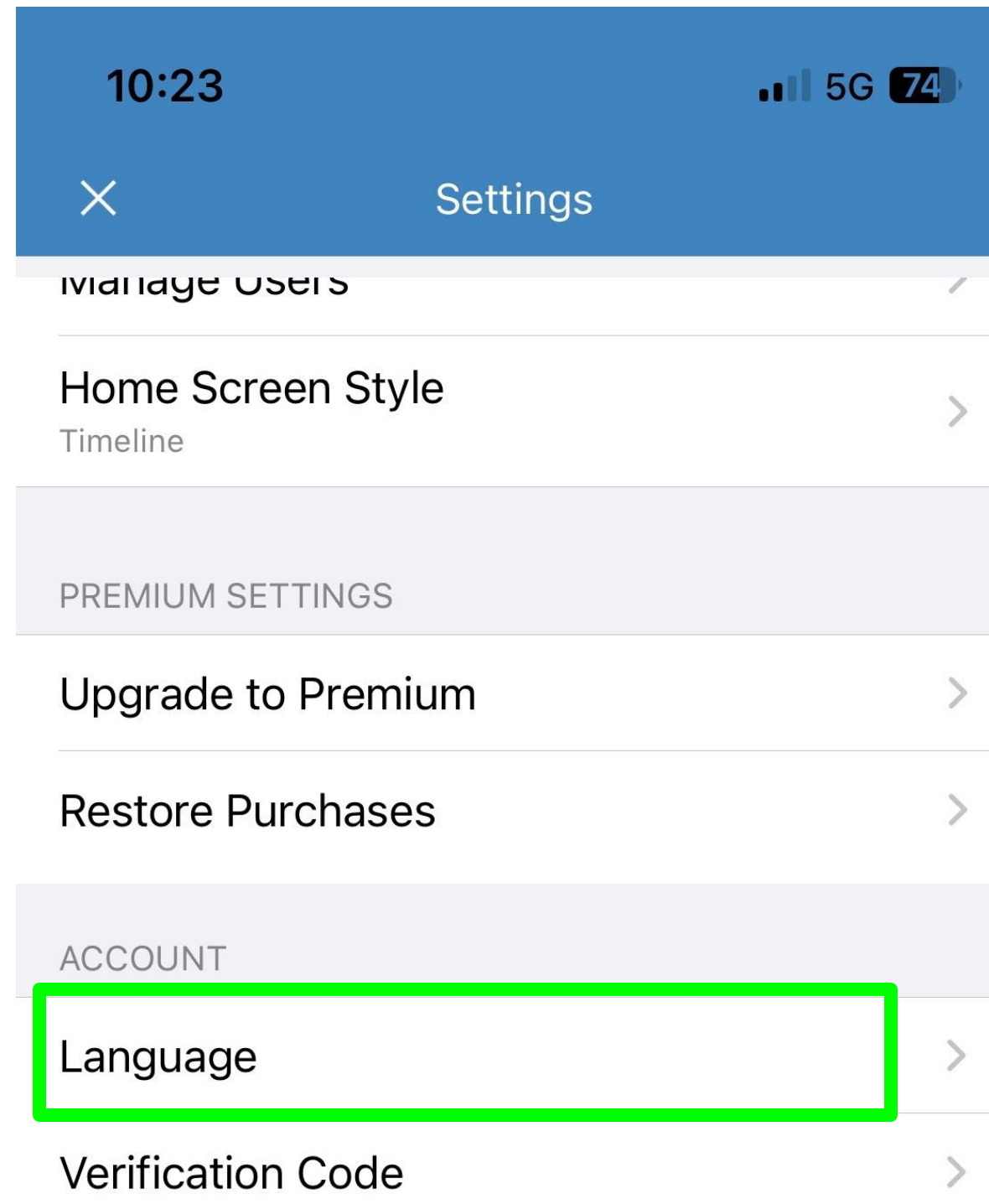
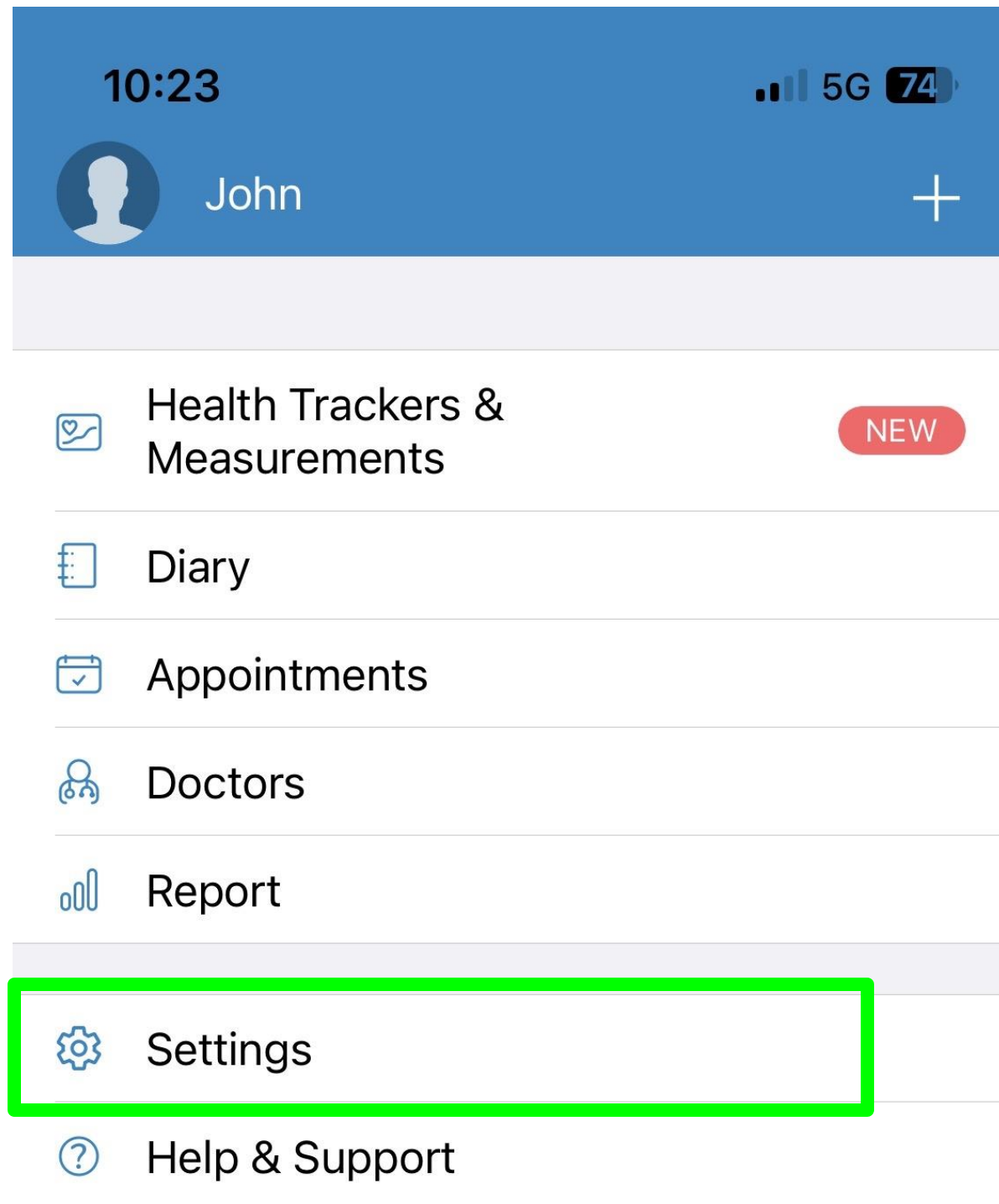
Usually, the first time you use an app, it will prompt you to set up the app including creating an account and indicating your preferences. This may include:

- Notification preferences
- Permissions and restrictions preferences
- Language preferences

Using apps: Language preferences

- Some apps are available in multiple languages.
- To check if the app you are using is available in multiple languages, you can open the app, go into settings and see if the app has a language option.

Using apps: Language preferences

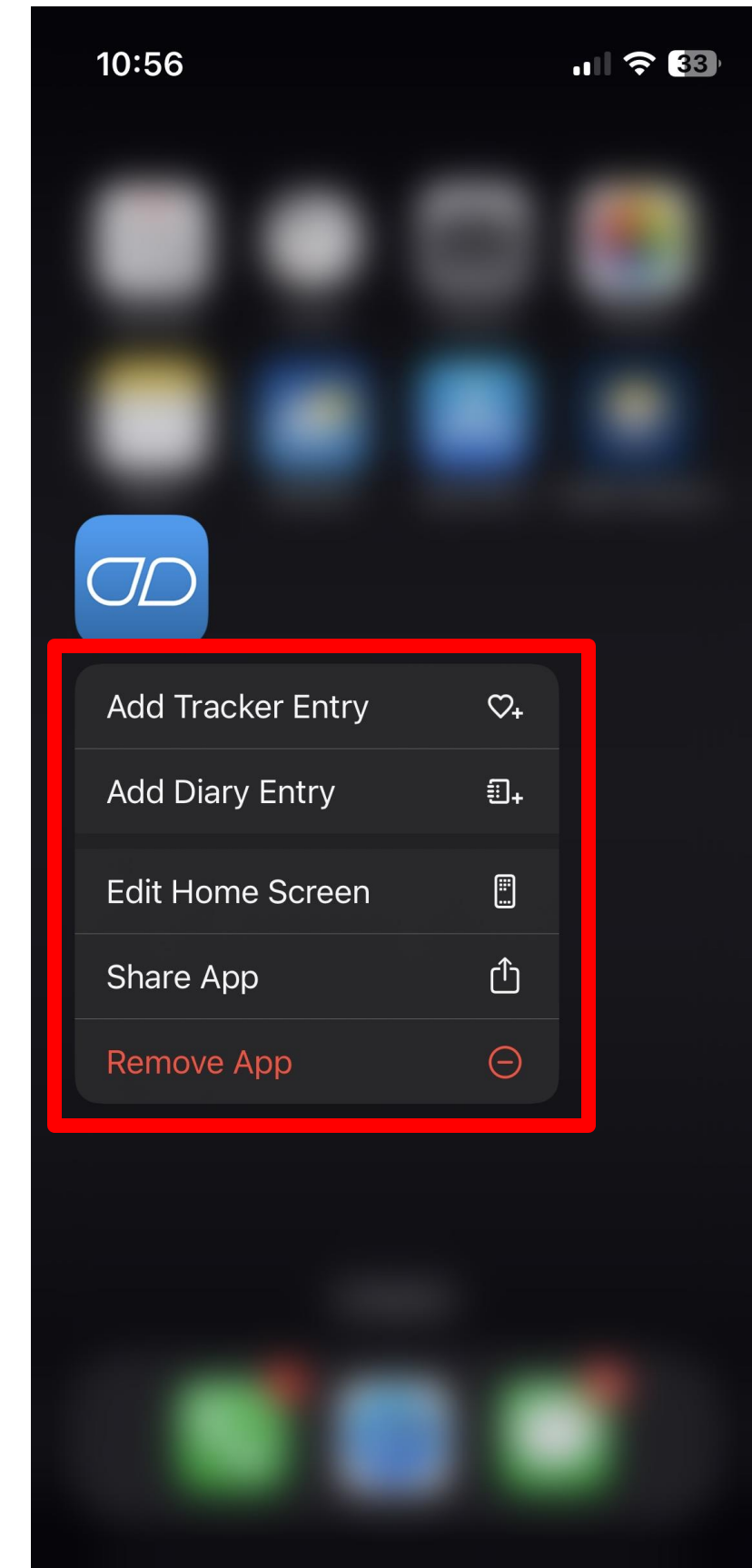
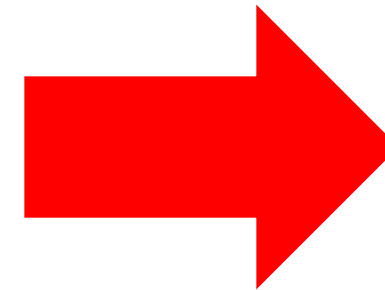


Uninstalling apps

How to uninstall apps

To uninstall an app, tap and hold the app icon until you see a list of options appear.

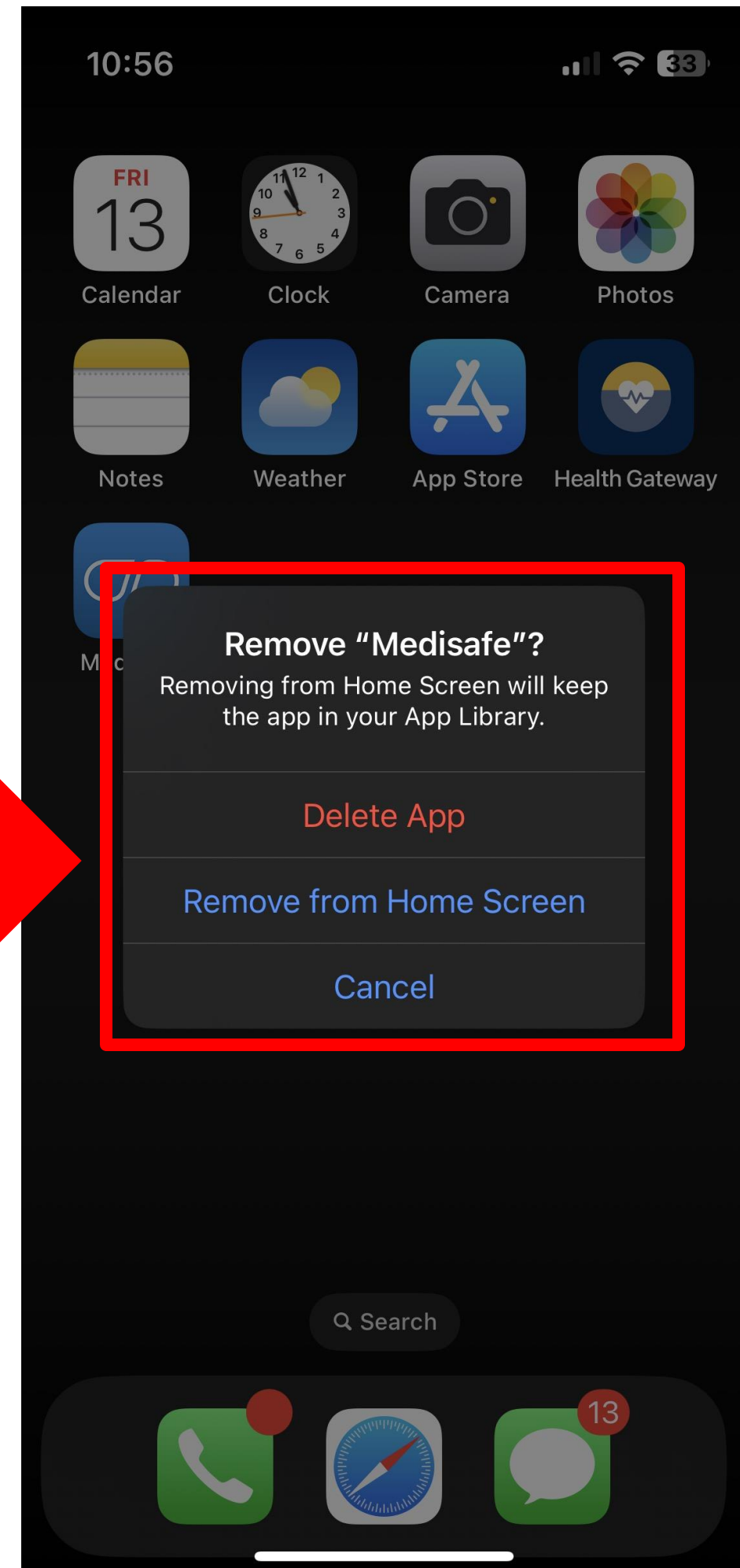
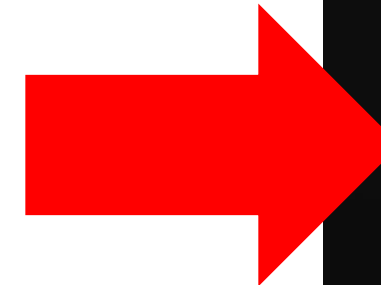
Then select “Remove App”.



How to uninstall apps

Your phone will prompt you to confirm the uninstallation. To proceed, select “Delete App”.

If you wish to discontinue uninstallation, select “Cancel”.



We learned:

- What is an app
- How apps can support your health
- Tips for choosing a quality app
- Installing apps
- Using apps
- Uninstalling apps



Questions?



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Digital Emergency Medicine

Department of Emergency Medicine | Faculty of Medicine

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