ABSTRACT
Understanding and managing one’s health often requires tracking one’s behaviors, context, and outcomes. People increasingly turn to digital tools to help record and make sense of these data. Despite some successes, many people still struggle to fit this tracking into their everyday lives or to find actionable insights in the resulting data.

In this talk, I will use food tracking — an important tool for supporting many health goals — as an example to illustrate current practices and promising design approaches. While people do use current health and tracking tools to support health and wellness, they also encounter many barriers to collecting, reflecting, and acting on their data. Techniques that reduce the burdens associated with these activities can better help people achieve their goals.

People also turn to others, such as peers and health experts, for help understanding and acting on their health data. While these collaborations may help people access additional expertise, they can also falter due to misunderstandings, mis-aligned goals, or tools that are only designed for one user. I will show how designing for collaboration from the start of tracking can help people more efficiently and effectively manage their health.

BIO
Sean Munson is an Assistant Professor at the University of Washington’s Department of Human Centered Design and Engineering and a member of the DUB group. He studies how people interpret and act on their personal data to understand relationships between their behaviors, contexts, and outcomes and to make sense of the world around them. He research focuses on health and wellness and on diversity of news and information access.

Sean completed a BS in Engineering at Olin College in 2006 and his PhD at the University of Michigan’s School of Information in 2012, and he is a 2016 recipient of an NSF Faculty Early Career Development Award. Previously, he has been a political blogger and, while working at Boeing, designed concepts for future passenger airplane interiors.