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Mio Alpha is a less cumbersome heart rate watch for athletes

by **Dante D'Orazio**
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It's not hard to find fitness trackers here at CES (just take a look around the South Hall), but one that has caught our eye outside of the usual suspects is the Mio Alpha. The company is here with its heart rate watch after a successful Kickstarter campaign this summer, and we've just had the chance to use the product for

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Alpha shines a green light that's reflected off the capillaries in the top of your wrist. The watch then monitors how much light is reflected back to pull a reading. Watches like the Basis use the same technology, but Mio CEO Liz Dickinson says that the Alpha uses a Philips-made algorithm that ignores false signals to be able to still get ECG-accurate readings during workouts.

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When we tried out the Alpha, we were encouraged to wear it snugly above the wrist bone to ensure proper measurements. (You don't want ambient light getting between the watch and your wrist.) The watch quickly pulled a reading after putting it into active mode (enabled by a long press of one of two buttons on the device), and data was then easily streamed in real-time over Bluetooth 4.0 to apps like Endomondo, Wahoo, and Adidas micoach for iOS. The watch itself isn't bad looking, though it's up to you whether or not the silicon wristband is right for you. We're also slightly concerned that it could be hard to read the watch's display in either sunlight or dark conditions, and we wish it offered all-day tracking of steps, calories, stories climbed, and sleep like the Basis or the Fitbit One and Fuelband. If you're a performance athlete who isn't happy with current solutions, however, the $199 watch (available now) might be right for you.

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