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Digits

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Recommended by One in Ten Doctors: the iPhone

By Nick Wingfield

When Apple first started promoting applications for the iPhone, CEO Steve Jobs touted physician reference guides and other medical programs as an important category of software for the device. At least a tenth of the doctors in the U.S. concur with that view.

Epocrates Inc., one of the big publishers of mobile electronic medical guides, [estimates](#) that 10% of physicians in the U.S. are actively using some version of Epocrates' software for the iPhone. The company says there are 75,000 doctors that have installed an Epocrates application on their iPhone or iPod touch and synchronized it to get fresh medical content within

the last six months. There are about 700,000 physicians in the U.S., Epocrates says (the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) says there were 633,000 in 2006).

Epocrates was able to come up with its estimates because users of its applications must identify their occupation when they register the software. The company didn't include all the nurses, medical students and other healthcare professionals using Epocrates in its final tally. A spokeswoman says the company saw a similar uptake during the early days of the first version of the software for Palm devices, but since then the iPhone is the fastest growing device for Epocrates.

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