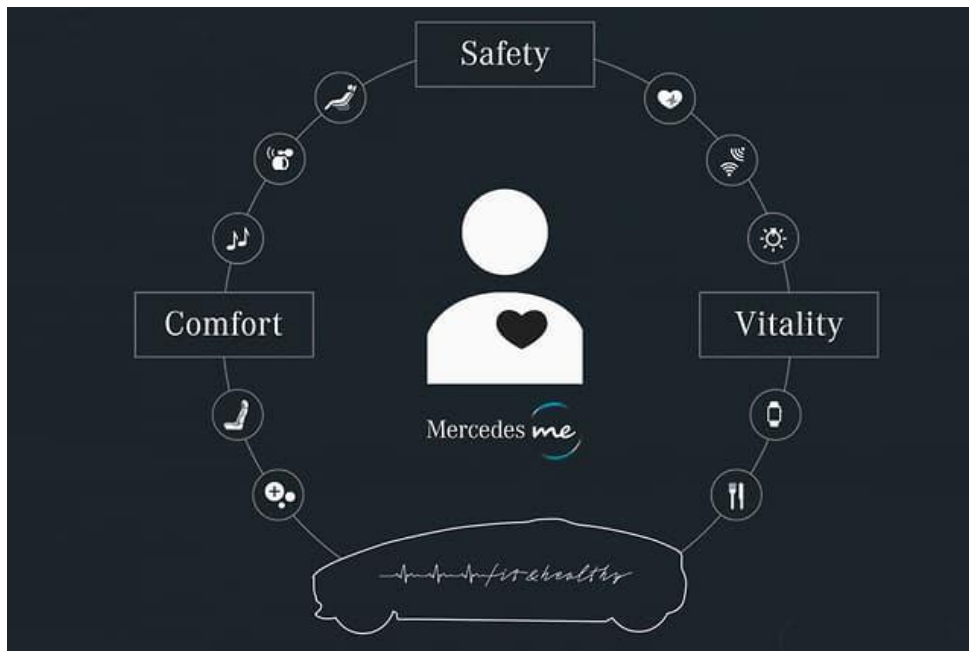




# CES 2017: Mercedes-Benz wants you fit and healthy

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Welcome to the future: Motion seats that make you happy, steering wheels that monitor your heartbeat, pixel headlights that project movies

Seats that improve your health and digital headlights that can double as a movie projector are two technology highlights revealed by Mercedes-Benz at the 2017 CES (Consumer Electronics Show) in Las Vegas overnight.

“Motion Seats”, as new Benz R&D boss Ola Kallenius dubbed them at a media briefing, are part of a ‘fit and healthy’ strategy for vehicles to exploit their growing connectivity to improve the condition of their passengers.

“We looked at the fact that the average German now sits for more than seven and a half hours every day,” Kallenius said.

“This has severe effects on our health – some doctors already say “sitting is the new smoking”.”

As the name suggests the cushion and backrest of motion seats move slightly every now and then. Kallenius claimed stress relief and an uplifted mood were the result for passengers.

The Benz R&D chief also revealed a bigger picture for monitoring and improving passenger health via connectivity.

“We’ll take a holistic approach here, connecting music, light climate, climate control, seating and more with data from sensors in the car and wearable devices.

“In the future, our cars will be able to read your state of body and mind and react accordingly to keep you relaxed and safe.”

Benz has also designed a steering wheel that can monitor heart rate in the same way a running machine can.

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While some of these gadgets were featured in a concept S-Class at CES, Kallenius confirmed that at least some of this health tech wasn’t that far away and wouldn’t necessarily be debuting in the most luxurious models first up. In fact, they’ll debut on Mercedes most affordable model, the \$30,000 A-Class.

“Some of the fit and healthy features we are working on will even be launched on the next generation A-class,” he said.

“Hundreds of thousands of people will be able to use these technologies.”

Kallenius revealed Benz’s commercial vehicle department has also developed a shirt that measures the driver’s heart rate. If it detects irregularities the vehicle will ask if the driver is okay and if there is no reaction, it will brake and place an emergency call.

“This could be a very useful tool for bus drivers, for example,” Kallenius added.

The company is also spruiking new HD digital headlights that are fitted with over one million tiny micro mirrors each.

By using powerful algorithms to adapt the brightness value for each of these mirrors – or pixels – in real-time, a headlight could highlight a pedestrian while not lighting the face.

It could also be possible to project light traces on the road such as zebra crossings to signal to pedestrians that it is safe to work.

Another possibility is to project a smiley face to greet your neighbour in the morning. Or perhaps a skull and crossbones to someone who sniped your car park.

And there's another function too.

“If your television is broken you can use it as a projector to watch a movie if that's what you want to do,” quipped Kallenius.

“But I don't know if that's going to be first-use case that we put into place,” said the Benz exec.

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