

Tracking Blood Pressure at Home Can Help Control Hypertension

Patients who monitor their blood pressure at home experience better, more accurate readings and lower medical costs

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At-home monitoring could lead to more customized treatment for hypertension and reduce medical costs for the 75 million American adults with high blood pressure, suggest new findings presented at the American Heart Association's (AHA) Joint Hypertension 2018 Scientific Sessions, reports [AHA](#).

Despite guidelines from the AHA and American College of Cardiology (ACC) that stress the importance of recording blood pressure (BP) levels at home, a majority of treatment plans don't include this key BP management tool.

For the study, researchers explored the effect of one intervention on 2,550 adult patients with persistent uncontrolled hypertension. Participants received free home blood pressure monitors, online and print resources to help track their readings, and monitoring reminders. Providers were also made aware that patients were monitoring their blood pressure at home.

Results showed that nearly 67 percent of patients achieved BP control by their third office visit and almost 60 percent realized this goal by the sixth appointment. (Researchers attributed the percentage drop to an adjustment in blood pressure meds by doctors based on individuals' at-home readings.) Scientists also noted a decrease in patients' systolic (the top number) and diastolic (the bottom number) blood pressure readings.

Six months after the intervention, about 80 percent of participants achieved hypertension control (using the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set 2018 standards). In addition, 72 percent of patients mastered their BP levels under AHA and ACC guidelines for 2017.

"Even with the more stringent guidelines, we showed home blood pressure monitoring is vital to achieving control among hypertensive patients," said Roy R. Champion, MSc, BSN, a clinical quality registered nurse at Scott and White Health Plan in Temple, Texas, one of the researchers conducting the study.

In addition to these findings, scientists concluded that at-home monitoring combined with

traditional provider care saved participants money by reducing their number of office visits each year and also lowered costs for medications and emergency departments.

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