

# Self-monitoring of blood pressure improves control

By ACSH Staff — March 7, 2013

Home blood pressure monitoring programs demonstrated superiority to usual care for keeping hypertension in check, a [randomized controlled trial found](#) [1].

Led by Dr. David Magid from Kaiser Permanente Colorado, a team of researchers followed 348 hypertensive patients, half of whom used the American Heart Association's Heart 360 Program a free, online tool for tracking heart health. Users can upload blood pressure data from their home blood pressure machines and send it to their health care providers.

Two groups of patients with hypertension were compared. One group of 175 patients used home blood pressure monitoring with Heart360 and a second group of 173 patients received usual care, that is, they were advised that their blood pressure was high, received written educational materials on managing high blood pressure, diet, and physical activity, and were instructed to follow-up with their primary care physician.

After 6 months, 54 percent of the Heart360/home monitoring group had reached their goal blood pressure, as compared to only 35 percent of the usual care group. The benefits of Heart360/home blood pressure monitoring were even greater in people with diabetes or chronic kidney disease.

The study was published in the American Heart Association journal *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*.

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross commented, Given the extent of undiagnosed and undertreated hypertension in our country, and the progressive, often symptom-free damage done by poorly controlled blood pressure, any methodology for better tracking of treatment has huge potential benefits. Home BP monitoring can diminish or eliminate the so-called white-coat hypertension, which causes atypical elevations in doctors' offices. Or, it can confirm that office BP readings are accurate, or even under-stated. This simple technique should be encouraged.

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## Links

[1] <http://www.medpagetoday.com/Cardiology/Hypertension/37694>