

# Use of EHRs associated with higher rate of detection of growth disorders in children

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"Monitoring of linear growth is a well-established part of pediatric health care in the developed world. Although monitoring aims to support early diagnosis and timely treatment of disorders affecting growth, such disorders are often diagnosed late," write Ulla Sankilampi, M.D., Ph.D., of Kuopio University Hospital, Kuopio, Finland, and colleagues in *JAMA* this week.

As reported in a Research Letter, the authors compared the effectiveness of a novel computerized and automated growth monitoring (AGM) strategy integrated into an electronic health record (EHR) system in the [primary care](#) setting to standard growth monitoring (SGM) in 2008-2009. The preceding 3 years (2005-2008) were used as a comparator. Automated growth monitoring included analysis of growth data and referral of abnormal data for review, in addition to SGM.

During the control years, an annual average of 33,029 children were screened. An average of 4 children were diagnosed with a new growth disorder. During the AGM intervention year, the number of new diagnoses was 28 among the 32,404 screened children. The rate of [growth disorders](#) diagnoses was 0.1 per 1,000 screened children in the control years vs. 0.9 per 1,000 in the AGM year.

"In this population-based cohort study, we showed that screening of growth disorders using algorithms integrated into an EHR system was associated with a higher rate of detection and referral to [specialist care](#)," the authors write. "Whether the results are generalizable to other

countries remains to be determined."

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