

Electronic monitoring device may help lower salt intake

November 16 2014



Using an electronic monitoring device may help heart failure patients and their families stick to a low-salt diet, according to research presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2014.

The Family Sodium Watcher Program (Family SWAP) focuses on a partnership between the heart failure patient and a caregiver/member of the family to adapt to the taste of a low-salt diet and includes using an electronic monitoring device to detect [salt content](#) in food and avoid high-salt food during the adaptation period.

In the three-month trial of 15 patient-caregiver pairs:

- The intervention group of eight patients received 12 weeks of self-care education for [heart failure](#) with gradual adaptive strategies in [salt intake](#). Participants said the device was easy to use and helped them maintain a low-sodium diet. Some said they enjoyed their low-salt diets more and 90 percent noticed a change in their ability to taste salt in their food. Caregivers reported no increased burden due to the program.
- The usual care/control group of seven patients didn't change behavior.

The Family SWAP may help the entire family improve their lifestyles, researchers said.

The pilot study was funded by the American Heart Association and the University of Kentucky.

Provided by American Heart Association

Citation: Electronic monitoring device may help lower salt intake (2014, November 16) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-11-electronic-device-salt-intake.html>

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