

Can experimental nasal spray treat common heart problem?

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(HealthDay)—An experimental nasal spray helped treat a common rapid heart rate condition, researchers report.

The [spray](#), called Etripamil, was tested in [patients](#) with paroxysmal supraventricular tachycardia (PSVT). PSVT affects about 500,000 Americans and leads to more than 50,000 hospital visits a year in the United States.

"This study introduces a completely novel therapy that has never been used before, and has the potential to alter how we treat patients with PSVT," said study lead author Dr. Bruce Stambler. He is a cardiac electrophysiologist at Piedmont Heart Institute in Atlanta.

Right now, there is no PSVT treatment that patients can use at home or without medical supervision. They are often treated with adenosine, [calcium channel blockers](#) or beta blockers, which must be given intravenously in a hospital or other monitored setting, the researchers

said.

The phase 2 trial included more than 100 patients from the United States and Canada. The researchers said [rapid heart rate](#) was controlled within 15 minutes in 87 percent of patients who received a 70-milligram (mg) dose of the [nasal spray](#); 75 percent of patients who got 105 mg; and 95 percent of patients given a 140-mg dose.

That compared to 35 percent of patients who received a placebo.

The most common side effects were temporary nasal congestion or irritation, according to the study, presented Thursday at the Heart Rhythm Society's annual meeting, in Chicago.

"Many patients who suffer from PSVT can experience sudden episodes anytime and anywhere. This fast-acting nasal spray therapy could give patients the convenience to self-administer treatment no matter the location and without having to go to the hospital," Stambler said in a society news release.

Until published in a peer-reviewed medical journal, research presented at meetings should be considered preliminary.

More information: The American Heart Association has more on [fast heart rate](#).

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