

Remotely monitoring heart patients with implanted defibrillators lowers risk of death

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(Medical Xpress)—Patients with implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICD) have significantly lower risk of death and re-hospitalization if they are followed through an automatic, wireless remote monitoring system, a Yale clinical study has found. Results of the study are being presented at the annual meeting of the Heart Rhythm Society.

ICDs are used to treat patients at [high risk](#) of [sudden cardiac death](#). Remote patient monitoring can help physicians keep an eye on patients once they are home by wirelessly communicating with the implanted

device to make sure it is functioning properly and that the patient is doing well. But despite the nearly universal availability of wireless technology in the United States, less than half of eligible patients are monitored in this way.

The reasons why this technology is underutilized are not known, but one potential reason is the relative absence of evidence of the impact of [remote monitoring](#) on patient outcomes. To address this gap in knowledge, Yale researchers partnered with the American College of Cardiology and Boston Scientific, a manufacturer of ICDs, to examine the outcomes of nearly 38,000 ICD patients. The study found that patients using remote monitoring were 33% less likely to die and 20% less likely to be re-hospitalized in the three years following device implantation.

"Our findings show that [patients](#) with defibrillators who use wireless remote monitoring do much better than those who do not," said Dr. Joseph Akar, associate professor of medicine at Yale School of Medicine. "We believe this study provides strong evidence supporting the broader use of this technology to improve patient outcomes."

Provided by Yale University

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