

Re: Does Resperate really work?

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Lower BP A Breath Away?

Study: Musical Breathing Device Helped Users Lower Blood Pressure

Oct. 15, 2004

(WebMD) The computerized musical device called RESPeRATE helps people breathe slowly and lowers their blood pressure, research shows.

The RESPeRATE device sells for about \$300. Its manufacturer, InterCure Ltd., claims it lowers blood pressure. And it does, report high blood pressure expert William J. Elliott, MD, PhD, and colleagues at Rush University Medical Center.

"I am happy to say that despite our original expectations, it worked," Elliott tells WebMD. Elliott and colleagues report their findings on the RESPeRATE device in the October issue of The Journal of Clinical Hypertension. InterCure Ltd. funded the study.

Music, Breathing, and Blood Pressure

The RESPeRATE device has three components. One is a little computerized module the size of a personal CD player. The second is a standard set of earphones. And the third is a chest strap holding a breath sensor.

Patients put the elastic strap around their chest, put on the earphones, and sit in a chair. The device plays soothing music. Incorporated into the music are tones that represent the patient's actual breathing. Patients are instructed to match their breathing to the tones, which gradually slow until a person is breathing at the relaxing rate of 10 breaths per minute.

'Sneaky' RESPeRATE Device Study

Elliott and colleagues asked 149 patients with high blood pressure to use a home blood-pressure monitor. What they didn't tell them was that the study was really a test of the RESPeRATE device.

Along with their blood pressure monitor, about two-thirds of the

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patients unexpectedly got the RESPeRATE device. The very simple instructions implied that it would help measure and record their blood pressure. Elliott says the study's "sneaky" design limited unwanted influences on blood pressure often seen in other studies of blood pressure treatments.

So what happened? Nearly everyone who got the RESPeRATE device was able to use it correctly. Of the 89 patients who got the RESPeRATE device, 33 used it a lot. They achieved 180 minutes of deep breathing over the eight-week study. Because the RESPeRATE device only gradually lowers breathing rate, they actually used the device for about 15 minutes a day.

These frequent users got a 15-point drop in blood pressure. Even a small, sustained drop in blood pressure can have big health benefits.

In other studies, patients who aggressively monitor their blood pressure usually see a small but significant blood pressure drop. That happened here, too. Monitoring alone resulted in a 9.2 point drop in systolic blood pressure. Adding the RESPeRATE device lowered blood pressure even more.

"Those who got the device — even though they were not expecting it — used it correctly," Elliott says. "Those who did were able to lower their blood pressure."

### Do You Really Need the RESPeRATE Device?

Why not just sit and breathe slowly while listening to relaxing music? It might work, and a portable CD player is less expensive than a RESPeRATE device. But Elliott says the RESPeRATE device does a lot more than play music.

"The reason the machine might be more helpful is that it is a method of biofeedback that allows you not to have to focus on lowering your breathing rate. It does that for you," Elliott says. "You just follow the tones and do the breathing. Because you don't spend much effort in your muscles or your brain, you will have a better relaxation response — and some reduction in blood pressure. All those things are tied together."

If you have high blood pressure, see a doctor before trying any over-the-counter treatment, warns Laurence Sperling, MD, director of preventive cardiology at Atlanta's Emory University.

"It is important for anybody with high blood pressure to seek the advice of a doctor in addressing the causes and also treatment approaches," Sperling tells WebMD. "It seems it should be simple and easy — but actually, high blood pressure can be difficult to treat. But this device, for some people, could help them improve their blood pressure."

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Sperling notes that he regularly refers high blood pressure patients to psychological services for stress reduction, including biofeedback training.

SOURCES: Elliott, W.J. The Journal of Clinical Hypertension, October 2004; vol 6: pp 553–559. William J. Elliott, MD, PhD, professor of preventive medicine, internal medicine, and pharmacology, Rush Medical College, Chicago. Laurence Sperling, MD, director of preventive cardiology, Atlanta's Emory University. RESPeRATE web site