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New wearable patch to detect heart ailments

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Researchers have found a wearable patch that acts like a sensor can effectively improve the diagnosis rate for heart rhythm disorder without interfering with routine activities.

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The device resulted in more people receiving critical preventive therapies, which might have gone undiagnosed, said the researchers while emphasising the use of digital medicine technologies to identify undiagnosed Afib disorder in at-risk populations.

Atrial fibrillation (Afib) disorder is characterised by increased or irregular heart rhythm that increases the risk of stroke, heart failure and other cardiovascular diseases.

"Our study shows an almost threefold improvement in the rate of diagnosis of AFib in those actively monitored compared to usual care," said Steven Steinhubl, Director of digital medicine at Scripps Translational Science Institute (STSI) in California, US.

The study was done on 5,214 individuals for one year, with one third of the group being assigned to the monitored cohort and the rest being observational controls.

The participants self-applied the wearable sensor patch for two weeks and returned it for analysis.

The team found that six per cent of the group developed Afib and nearly three per cent among the controls developed the disease.

"This study demonstrates the utility of a digital approach not only to diagnosing asymptomatic AFib, but to the clinical research field as a whole," Steinhubl explained.