

Product Spotlight

Our Editor spoke with Treena Hanschke, BSC, RRT, The Snore Shop, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, about her experience using Itamar Medical's Watch-PAT screening and diagnosing device.

What factors did you consider, when deciding to trial/purchase the Watch-PAT?

There were many factors that influenced us to trial and then ultimately purchase the Watch-PAT. What appealed to us was the ease-of-use for the patient and how the reliable cutting-edge technology seemed to provide more information about a person's one-night sleep than any other sleep testing devices that are out there in the market right now. The ability to monitor the sleep stages and quantify how much REM percentage-wise that a patient is getting is extremely useful. In particular, the RDI, AHI, and ODI are together very useful and not too many devices provide all three of those indexes; the Watch-PAT does, which is great!

Tell us about the training process.

The training process was very straight forward. It basically involved a visit from Itamar representatives to introduce the device to us. First, they installed all of the software on our computers. Next, they took us through and trained us on the software so we could use it proficiently. After our training, I decided to test for myself what it was like to sleep with the device. My information was downloaded and recorded. The next day, the Itamar representatives taught us how to download and analyze sleep studies correctly. The duration of the training was four hours in the afternoon and then another hour or two in the morning. The device was very simple and it provided us with more than enough information to go ahead with the trial.

Did you consider the product easy to understand and use?

The Watch-PAT is not only easy for us to use in terms of downloading and analyzing a sleep study, but the way that our patients responded to it was remarkable! For the patient, it was so much easier to use than the current device that they were being administered. The current study devices that we were using failed our patients because it did not provide enough

information. Our sheer frustration with the current devices led us to move forward with the Watch-PAT, which was hands down so much easier to use! As a bonus, there is a 1-800-number available for patients to call in the middle of the night that directly connects them straight to a live operator standing by in case the patient had questions or needed help; that bonus feature, which I consider to be a huge asset, really means a lot to our patients.

What do you think needs improvement?

We show our patients raw data from their studies so they could see how they sleep and understand their sleep disorders better. The Watch-PAT is a little difficult in explaining raw data, however Itamar has released a patient information booklet that helps explain the sleep study in easy-to-understand English. It would be nice to be able to differentiate central apneas from obstructive apneas, which is something that we are certainly looking forward to later in terms of response to CPAP. It truly is a minor issue because most of the apnea that we see is overwhelmingly obstructive apnea; however if we had the ability to immediately diagnose central apneas from obstructive apneas it would be very helpful for researchers. I am basically scraping the bottom of the barrel to tell you what could be improved.

How would you rank Itamar's after-sale support?

We recently completed our trial with the Watch-PAT and ultimately purchased many of its units, therefore we are still only in the early stages of using the device. Even though our relationship with Itamar is still fresh and is yet to blossom, we have received phenomenal support from Itamar thus far! The support we have received has been more than accommodating. We never had to wait for a response to our questions. If there were questions or issues with the Watch-PAT, a phone call or an e-mail would be sent out and then within minutes later, we would receive a phone call or an e-mail back responding to our concerns; that reciprocation and customer attention is really important! The customer service representative's knowledge of their product is overwhelmingly impressive; they were able to go into as much detail as we needed to address any of the issues. I definitely give Itamar's after-sale support 10 out of 10!