



Personal Decision Support System
for Heart Failure Management

A Personal Experience

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www.heartman-project.eu

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A Personal Experience

Good afternoon,

My name is Luc De Ram,
and I've been a heart patient
since 2000.

In that year, I suffered from a
severe heart attack for the first time.
In 2005, I had a heart surgery.
So, you could call me an
experienced patient by now.



A Personal Experience

Becoming a heart patient is a major life change.

You are forced to quit working, and you should start taking various kinds of medication, watching your diet, make sure you stay physically active enough in daily life...

Suddenly, there's a lot of things to consider in daily life. Therefore, it's not easy to adjust your daily routines to this new reality. Especially as a 'new' patient, any help in making this transition is more than welcome.

A Personal Experience

The HeartMan system is a system that can help you to make these changes to your daily routines.

It does that by reminding you of different aspects you should consider in your daily life.

Personally, I think the HeartMan system will provide the most value to 'new' heart patients that recently suffered a heart attack, or patients that are quite inactive in their daily lives.



A Personal Experience

I'm a more experienced heart patient, and I already tried to stay active before the HeartMan trial, but for me, the experience has been quite rewarding, as well.

Together with my wife, I have tried out the system, making it as useful as possible in our daily lives.

A Personal Experience

The system wasn't perfect from the start. Especially at the start of the trial, there have been some problems.

The system shut down unexpectedly, the time on the wristband was wrong, and the Bluetooth connection sometimes failed. However, these technical issues were ironed out, and I could use the system without any problems during most of the trial.

This is what I would like to talk about today: I would like to share some of my experiences in using the system on a day-to-day basis.

A Personal Experience

The most visible part of the HeartMan system is, of course, the wristband. I have worn the wristband every day, during the trial.

People did ask some questions about the device from time to time, but in general, people reacted positively to this. Personally, I considered it especially useful to be able to monitor my heart rate constantly, making sure that it remained under the upper limit of 130.



A Personal Experience

Wearing the wristband during the study was one of the reasons that I bought a step counter for myself, after the trial.

The device doesn't measure the same things as the HeartMan system does, but it does allow me to keep track of whether I'm active enough or not, and it even allows me to monitor my sleep. Being able to monitor my daily step count further motivates me to keep active.

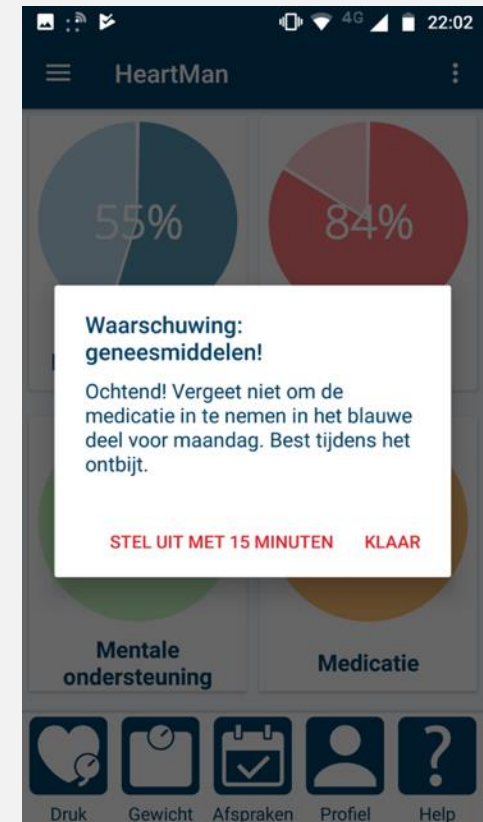
A Personal Experience

Reminders were another useful aspect in the HeartMan system.

Each day, I was reminded in the morning to measure my blood pressure and my weight.

I didn't measure this before the HeartMan trial, and now I've stopped using the HeartMan system, I also don't measure blood pressure and weight any more.

During the trial period, however, I did so in a very consistent way.



A Personal Experience

In the end, I took the information, and created my own graphs, and took them to the cardiologist, when we had an appointment. In this way, the HeartMan system, and the notifications in it, have definitely helped me to keep track of my weight and my blood pressure in a much more accurate way.



A Personal Experience

It was good to be reminded of the physical exercises, as well, although the exercises were often quite light for me.

I didn't ride the bike – I'm not very fond of it – but I always did the walking exercises. I already walked before the trial, and the HeartMan system has motivated me to keep doing so during the trial.



A Personal Experience

Given the fact that I'm already quite active in daily life, the physical activity aspect of HeartMan didn't have a major impact on my personal habits.

However, I can very well imagine that these exercises are very important for patients that have recently suffered a heart attack, or that are less active in daily life. For them, the system can offer a good programme of feasible exercises.

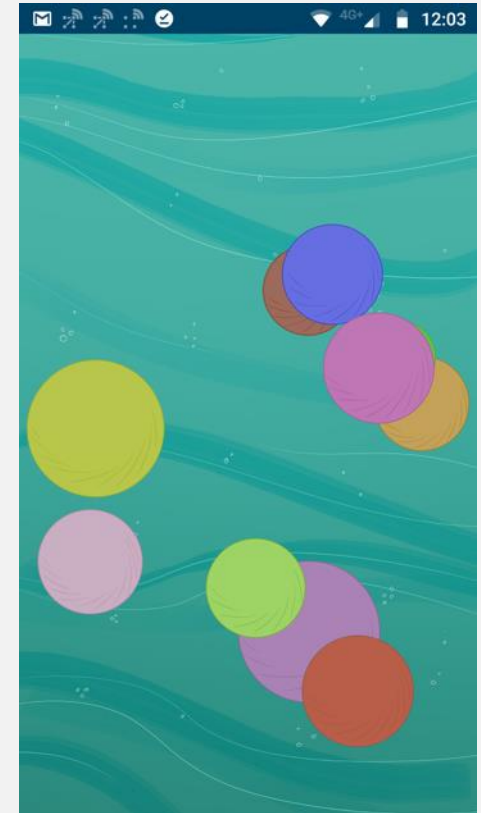
As for myself: after the trial, my step counter has allowed me to monitor whether I'm active enough. It keeps me motivated.

A Personal Experience

One part of the system which has proven less useful to me personally, is the aspect on mental health.

The mental health games are good to keep you occupied, but I didn't listen to all the mindfulness audio fragments.

This is the only aspect of the HeartMan system that I didn't really use. I have focused on the elements in the system that seemed most relevant and useful to me.



A Personal Experience

Concerning medication, it was useful to be able to check and follow up on whether I had taken the necessary medication or not.

I already used a pill box for my medication, in which I prepared my medication for one week. However, the HeartMan system added an additional element, by really checking whether or not you have actually taken the medication.



A Personal Experience

Also, the information about nutrition was useful.

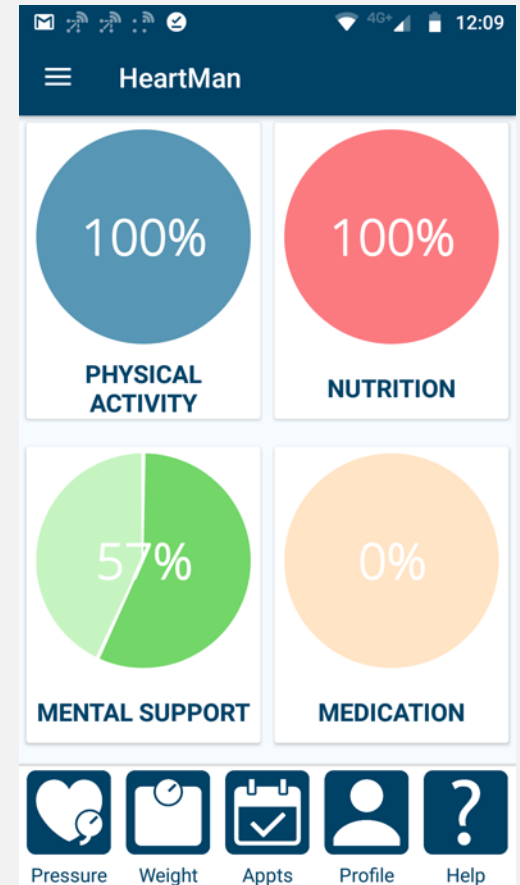
Given the fact that I've been a heart patient for quite a while, I already know roughly what to pay attention to in my diet. For me, I would have liked the nutritional information to be more elaborate: it's always nice to receive some additional tips concerning your diet.



A Personal Experience

For me, the most important outcome of the HeartMan trial period was that I started paying more attention to specific aspects of my life, such as my blood pressure, weight, and medication intake.

Therefore, I think that this is the main benefit of a system like HeartMan: the fact that it makes you more aware of a number of important aspects that are related to your illness.



Thank you!



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