



Personal Alarms

Personal alarms systems provide the peace of mind that help is always available when needed.

The Facts

1. Any person living alone, particularly seniors, should have some means of staying in contact with the outside world and attracting attention or calling for help in an emergency.

2. The ability to call for help not only provides you peace of mind but reassures your family and friends as well.

3. Assistive technology provides a variety of ways to stay in touch and call for help.

Staying in contact

There are a variety of different ways to maintain regular contact if you live on your own.

It can be as simple as organising a daily phone call with a family member or friend or having a neighbour drop around every other day.

If there is not a family member or friend that can perform this routine regularly there are service providers that can fulfil this role.

These services operate on the principle that they will call at a predetermined time at regular intervals of your choosing to check on your health and wellbeing. If the scheduled call is not answered an agreed series of actions is triggered which may include alerting a nominated person, someone visiting your home or emergency services being alerted.

There are also electronic systems available where a timer is activated when you leave your home. If the alarm is not de-activated within a certain time a phone call is placed automatically to a pre-programmed number.

As well as everyday situations this system is ideal for someone living on a farm or in a rural or isolated situation.

There is an alarm system to suit most needs.

Calling for help

When an elderly person lives on their own the ability to call for help in the case of emergency is absolutely critical.

Noisemakers

There are very basic ways of attracting attention when needed including a whistle, some sort of buzzer or a portable alarm system. A mobile phone is also an effective means of contact both at home and when out.

These forms of attracting attention will only be successful if you are conscious, the system is within reach and you are able to operate it.

One way alerts

There are a range of alert products available that act to alert a carer or another person of a problem.

These units generally consist of a transmitter and a receiver. When operated an alarm is triggered in the receiver indicating the need for assistance.

The receiver can also be mounted outside as an audible alarm or strobe light. This type of system can be very successful where a neighbour is nearby or in group housing situations.

Intercom

There are one-way intercom units available that are similar to a baby monitor system. Two way intercom systems allow a carer to speak to you and can also be connected to a video camera if required.

The success of these systems can be limited by the range between the sender and receiver units.

Non-monitored telephone alerts

This system involves the triggering of an alarm that automatically initiates a series of phone calls to pre-determined numbers and transmits a pre-recorded message. This system relies on the call being answered and not diverted to an answering machine or other non-manned service.

Monitored systems

By installing a monitored alarm system help can be easily accessed by the use of a button located on a pendant worn around your neck or on a wrist

band. In the case of a fall, accident or other emergency help is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

The base unit automatically dials the medical alarm company alerting them of an emergency. The alarm activation can also send an identification code that verifies the ID of the person and their address.

The systems generally has a two way speaker on the base unit which operates like a speakerphone that can be heard throughout the house. This allows the representative from the alert company to make contact and determine the specific problem.

Depending on the situation the company then alerts family, or emergency services and can stay on the line until help arrives.

Even though every person's circumstances are different it is crucial for people living alone to have an appropriate means of calling for help when needed.

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