

Peace of Mind with Personal Emergency Response Systems

by Art Hoffman, CEO, Vital-Link

As Americans live longer, the importance of living independently is continually growing. Emergency response systems have given older adults peace of mind, knowing that at the push of a button they can receive help. With the reliability of these systems, many seniors have been living in their homes for longer periods of time.

One out of three people over the age of 65 will fall this year. Falls can be prevented by increasing physical activity, modifying environment, managing medications and proper hydration and nutrition. Many falls can be prevented, but we also understand that no matter what is done, some older adults will still fall. A personal emergency response system acts as a safety net to get help in case of a fall or other emergency.

Personal Emergency Response Systems offer these benefits to loved ones

- Decreased anxiety living alone
- Reduced dependence on others
- Enhanced well-being and quality of life
- Easy to summon help, just push a button
- Psychological boost by maintaining control

Help Button and Two-Way Voice Unit

Pressing the help button (worn around the neck or wrist) will allow the subscriber to summon help when needed. The lightweight waterproof pendant allows free movement in and around the home. It gives one the ability to call for help without having to reach the phone. The communicator simply plugs into a modular telephone jack and an electric outlet. No special wiring or even an extra phone jack is needed.

Monitoring Service

The monitoring center receives calls from the communicator when it's activated. The center is staffed with caring professionals who are there to help. Once they receive a signal, they will try to speak to the subscriber over the communicator's built-in speaker. If the user cannot answer, they will either contact a designated friend or family member, or alert the proper

authorities. If the user can respond, the monitoring center will take the necessary action.

How They Work

In case of a fall or other medical emergency, the user simply pushes the emergency response system help button and the medical alarm will sound. The medical alert system will activate, and the subscriber will be connected to the emergency response monitoring center. Two-way voice communication will be established and the medical alarm monitors will speak with the subscriber and determine the type of help needed. Friends, family members, or emergency services are soon on their way to help.

What to Look For When Choosing a Company

- UL Listed 5 Diamond Certified 24 hour Monitoring Centers
- Waterproof Pendants
- Financial Aid Programs
- Units with a Battery Backup
- Low Monthly Monitoring Fees
- Warm, Personalized Service
- A Local Company that is Involved in the Community

Be Aware Of

- High Installation Costs
- Long-Term Contracts
- High Monthly Monitoring Fees
- High Pressure Companies

The medical alert system is not just for the frail elderly but also for anyone who wants to remain independent. Caregivers are more comfortable leaving older adults home alone when they have an emergency response system.

For more information about personal emergency response systems, or a free Fall Prevention DVD, contact Bay Area Vital-Link Emergency Response Systems at 1(800)752-5522 or visit www.vlink.org.

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