

## MEDICAL ALERT DEVICE

Dear Neighbor:

Recently we have had a few people fall in their homes. We have several residents who live alone and there is always a concern about falling or needing help with a health problem whether you live alone or not.

We are spreading the word on how to maintain an independent life and allow you to keep living in your own home as long as possible. A medical alert device is not only for seniors but for anyone. Having this device provides you with the peace of mind of knowing that you have round the clock medical help when needed with the push of a button.

Medical alert operators will have your medical history on file and will communicate with first responders.

There are many companies offering these devices with options for any need. Enclosed are the top recommended device companies.

When you're ready to begin shopping for a medical alert, you'll need to make three decisions that will affect the overall functionality of your system and how much you'll pay. The rundown:

### **1. Do You Want a Home-Based or Mobile System?**

Originally, medical alert systems were designed to work inside your home with your landline telephone.

And you can still have that option. Many companies now also offer the option of home-based systems that work over a cellular network for those who might not have a landline.

With these systems, pressing the wearable call button allows you to speak to a dispatcher through a base unit located in your home.

But many companies offer mobile options, too. You can use these systems at home, but they'll also allow you to call for help while you're out and about.

These operate over cellular networks and incorporate GPS technology. This way, if you get lost or press the call button for help but are unable to talk, the monitoring service can find you.

Someone who is frail and doesn't leave the house often might not need a mobile system, while an active older adult may want added protection outside the home, says Richard Caro, PhD, a co-founder of Tech-Enhanced Life, which evaluates and reviews products for older adults.

## **2. Should Your System Be Monitored or Not?**

The systems we've provided information on below are all monitored, meaning that the call button connects you with someone at a 24/7 dispatching center.

But you have the option to choose a system that isn't monitored. With these, when you press the call button, the device automatically dials a friend or family member on your programmed emergency call list.

These products can often be set up to call multiple people and to contact emergency services if you don't get an answer from someone on your list.

A key difference between the two is price. Monitored systems carry a monthly fee in addition to the purchase price for the device. But with unmonitored systems, you generally pay only for the device itself. Monitored systems may also have other fees, such as activation fees as well as minimum commitments or contracts. And cancellation and return policies can vary from company to company.

## **3. Should You Add a Fall-Detection Feature?**

Some companies offer the option of automatic fall detection for an additional monthly fee. Manufacturers say these devices sense falls when they occur and automatically contact the dispatch center, just as they would if you had pressed the call button.

And three important tips:

- **Check return policies carefully if you have hearing loss.** These policies may be an especially important consideration if you're in this group because you'll need to be able to set a device's volume high enough to hear the person on the other end of the line without a hearing aid. This can generally be tested only after purchase, so you may want to consider a system that's easy to return.
- **Ask for a deal.** When you contact a manufacturer, you may want to ask for a better price than the one that's listed. Several companies told us they allow their salespeople to offer discounts.
- **Be careful about buying for others.** If you're buying a medical alert system for a loved one, experts recommend asking which kind of product the recipient thinks he or she would wear and use, and which features are desired. "You don't surprise someone with one of these," It's not a gift option."

If you are interested in obtaining additional copies, they can be printed off of our website, listed under Events/Newsletter, or contact Miller Management: 941-923-5811

## Bay Alarm Medical



- Monthly cost for in-home landline service: \$20.
- Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$30.
- Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$25 or \$30, depending on plan and features chosen.
- Monthly cost to add fall detection: \$10.
- Commitment or contract: None.
- Activation fee: None.
- Cancellation fee: None (full refund, minus shipping costs, if you cancel in the first 30 days).
- Monitoring center certified by: Underwriters Laboratories (UL), a safety and consulting company.
- Alternate languages available: 180. Customer selects language when purchasing device.
- Network provider for cellular or mobile service: AT&T.
- Nonemergency customer-service hours:  
Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday-Sunday: 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Battery life of in-home call button: Five years for button without fall detection; two years for button with fall detection.
- Mobile unit battery life: Four days.
- Contact info: [www.bayalarmmedical.com](http://www.bayalarmmedical.com) : 877-522-9633.

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## Great Call Lively Mobile Plus



- Monthly cost for in-home landline service: No in-home-only service.
- Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$25 to \$50, depending on plan (\$50 device fee; service available in and out of home).
- Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$25 to \$50, depending on plan (\$50 device fee).
- Monthly cost to add fall detection: \$15 (fall detection plan includes additional features).
- Commitment or contract: None.
- Activation fee: \$35 via phone or \$25 online.
- Cancellation fee: None (full refund for first month of service and activation fee, except shipping costs and \$10 restocking fee, if device is returned in first 30 days).
- Monitoring center certified by: International Academies of Emergency Dispatch.
- Alternate languages available: More than 100.
- Network provider for cellular or mobile service: Verizon.
- Nonemergency customer-service hours:  
Monday-Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Sunday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Battery life of in-home call button: No in-home-only service.
- Mobile unit battery life: Up to 80 hours.
- Contact info: [www.greatcall.com](http://www.greatcall.com) : 800-918-8543

## Life Alert



- Monthly cost for in-home landline service: \$49.
- Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$49.
- Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$19.
- Monthly cost to add fall detection: Not offered.
- Commitment or contract: 36 months (void if user enters nursing home, has 24-hour professional care, or dies).
- Activation fee: \$0 to \$95, depending on plan.
- Cancellation fee: Varies depending on situation.
- Monitoring center certified by: UL, TMA (CSAA) Five Diamond Certified Monitoring Center.
- Alternate languages available: Some dispatchers speak multiple languages, but no contract with translation service.
- Network provider for cellular or mobile service: AT&T.
- Nonemergency customer-service hours:  
Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Sunday: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Battery life of in-home call button: Batteries never need charging. Last up to 10 years.
- Mobile unit battery life: Batteries never need charging.
- Contact info: [www.lifealert.com](http://www.lifealert.com) 800-360-0329.

## LifeStation



Monthly cost for in-home landline service: \$22.

Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$31.

Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$38.

Monthly cost to add fall detection: \$10.

Commitment or contract: None.

Activation fee: None.

Cancellation fee: None (full refund, minus shipping costs, if you cancel in the first 30 days).

Monitoring center certified by: UL and TMA.

Alternate languages available: More than 240 available via third-party interpreter.

Network provider for cellular or mobile service: AT&T and Verizon.

Nonemergency customer-service hours: 24/7. Battery

life of in-home call button: Up to five years. Mobile

unit battery life: Up to five days.

Contact info: [www.lifestation.com](http://www.lifestation.com) : 866-235-0672

## Medical Alert



- Monthly cost for in-home landline service: \$20.
- Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$30.
- Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$38.
- Monthly cost to add fall detection: \$10.
- Commitment or contract: None.
- Activation fee: None.
- Cancellation fee: None (full refund if you cancel in the first 30 days, prepaid shipping label for returns provided).
- Monitoring center certified by: UL, Factory Mutual Global (FMG).
- Alternate languages available: Yes, customer may specify language at time of purchase.
- Network provider for cellular or mobile service: AT&T.
- Nonemergency customer-service hours:  
Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Sunday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Battery life of in-home call button: More than five years.
- Mobile unit battery life: Up to 36 hours.
- Contact info: [www.medicalalert.com](http://www.medicalalert.com) : 800-800-2537

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## Medical Guardian



- Monthly cost for in-home landline service: \$30.
- Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$35.
- Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$40 (Active Guardian) or \$45 (Mobile Guardian), depending on the product.
- Monthly cost to add fall detection: \$10.
- Commitment or contract: None.
- Activation fee: None.
- Cancellation fee: None (prorated refund, including shipping costs, if you cancel within 10 days of receiving shipment).
- Monitoring center certified by: UL, TMA Five Diamond, Electronic Security Association, FMG.
- Alternate languages available: Spanish, and will connect with third-party service for other languages.
- Network provider for cellular or mobile service: AT&T.
- Nonemergency customer-service hours:  
Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Battery life of in-home call button: Up to five years.
- Mobile unit battery life: 24 hours or five days, depending on system.
- Contact info: [www.medicalguardian.com](http://www.medicalguardian.com) 800-668-9200

# MobileHelp



- Monthly cost for in-home landline service: \$20. Must request by phone.
- Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$20.
- Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$25. Must request by phone.
- Monthly cost to add fall detection: \$10. \$7.50 when combined with equipment protection.
- Commitment or contract: None.
- Activation fee: \$0. Processing fee may apply to select plans.
- Cancellation fee: None. (Full refund, including shipping costs, if you cancel in the first 30 days. Prorated refund, minus shipping costs, when you cancel after the first 30 days, call and return equipment.)
- Monitoring center certified by: UL.
- Alternate languages available: 240 languages through interpretation service.
- Network provider for cellular or mobile service: AT&T.
- Nonemergency customer-service hours:  
Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Battery life of in-home call button: Eight to 10 years.
- Mobile unit battery life: Up to 48 hours while in use and up to five days in standby mode.
- Contact info: [www.mobilehelp.com](http://www.mobilehelp.com) : 877-309-9968

## Philips Lifeline



- Monthly cost for in-home landline service: \$30 or \$45, depending on plan.
- Monthly cost for in-home cellular service: \$44 or \$59, depending on plan.
- Monthly cost for mobile GPS tracking option: \$50, \$100 one-time device fee (uses additional locating technologies, including WiFi).
- Monthly cost to add fall detection: \$0 to \$15, depending on equipment and plan.
- Commitment or contract: None.
- Activation fee: \$0 to \$50.
- Cancellation fee: None (no return shipping fee).
- Monitoring center certified by: UL.
- Alternate languages available: More than 200.
- Network provider for cellular or mobile service: AT&T.
- Nonemergency customer-service hours:  
Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Battery life of in-home call button: Five years.
- Mobile unit battery life: Two to three days or up to seven days, depending on system.
- Contact info: [www.lifeline.philips.com](http://www.lifeline.philips.com) : 855-681-5351