

UnaliWear™

Extending independence with dignity

Medical Alert System Buyer's Guide

Your Essential Guide to
Living Safely and Confidently



Key Sections

This guide will help you confidently choose the right medical alert system by exploring the things that matter most:



Types of Medical Alert Systems



Will It Help You When You Need It?



Fall Detection Features



Pricing & Contracts



Avoiding Scams & Pushy Sales Tactics



Talking to a Loved One About Medical Alerts

**Ready to uncover the ideal system for yourself or someone special?
Let's jump in!**

Buying for someone else?

Don't miss our section at the end on how to navigate this conversation!

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Types of Systems



On-the-Go Systems

Designed for protection both inside and outside the home.



Home-Based Systems

Provides protection within the home using a base station but doesn't work away from home.



Looking for *honest* reviews of specific devices?

Many review sites prioritize paid placements, with "top picks" determined by which companies pay the most. This is true for most products, including medical alerts.

Two well-known, reputable sources for unbiased reviews are **Wirecutter by The New York Times** and **Consumer Reports**. While Consumer Reports relies only on survey data from readers and does not test devices directly, Wirecutter conducts deep, independent testing using secret shoppers resulting in reliable, honest reviews of medical alert systems.



Crossover Systems

Provide some protection but lack the reliability of traditional monitored systems.



[Click here to read Wirecutter reviews!](#)

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Types of Systems: On-The-Go



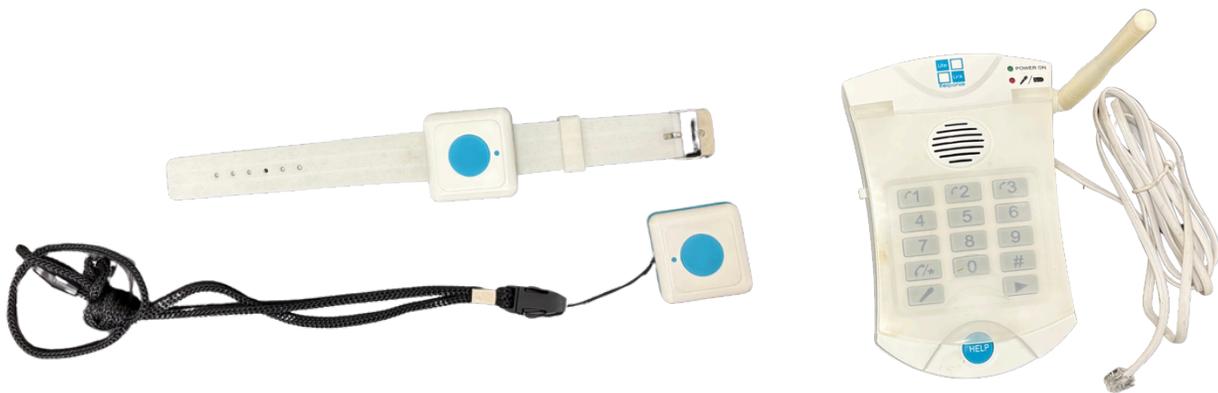
On-the-go medical alert systems are built for people who want **protection both inside and outside the home**. These wearable systems come in both traditional pendants or newer smartwatch form factors. **Using cellular connectivity**, they provide access to emergency help wherever you are, even during power outages. Some devices also connect to your home WiFi for improved reliability at home.

Common features include **GPS tracking, fall detection**, and the ability to **talk to an emergency operator through your device** without a smartphone, delivering peace of mind without limiting mobility or independence.

The small size of these systems mean they must be charged more often than home-based systems.

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Types of Systems: Home-Based Wearables



Traditional home-based medical alert systems are designed to provide **protection within the comfort of your home**. These systems typically include a **base station** connected to a landline or cellular network, **paired with a wearable help button** usually worn as a pendant or wristband. When the button is pressed, the system connects you to a monitoring center or emergency contact.

These systems are targeted towards **individuals who spend most of their time at home**. These systems are simple to use and often more affordable than on-the-go options. However, they offer **limited coverage outside the home** and may lack advanced features like GPS tracking or automatic fall detection.

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Crossover Systems: Home-Based Smart Speakers



Smart speakers or voice assistants like Amazon Alexa or Apple Siri can be used to call for help when you speak a command. They can also offer **added features** like medication reminders, calendar alerts, and home automation.

These systems are ideal for individuals who **prefer not to wear a device** or who want a hands-free option for summoning assistance. They **only provide protection at home** when you're **within speaking range** and able to talk. They also don't include automatic fall detection. For full coverage, **multiple devices are needed**, including in less-used areas like basements or garages.

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Crossover Systems: Smartwatches



Smartwatches can offer helpful safety features like fall detection and GPS, but they're **primarily designed as general tech devices**, not as dedicated medical alert systems. They're **great for tech-savvy users**, especially if you already own one, but they aren't designed specifically for medical use and **can be challenging for older adults** to operate.

Emergency responses often rely on reaching friends, family, or 911 rather than a professional monitoring center. Most devices must be **linked to a smartphone** and often have their own cellular plans. Compared to dedicated medical alert devices, smartwatches are more complex and **may lack the simplicity and reliability** many users need for everyday protection.

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The Most Important Question: Will Your Device Get Help When You Need It?

If the device can't get you help when you need it, it doesn't matter what it looks like or what it costs.



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Important Questions:

Will You Be Wearing It When You Need It?

A device only works if you're wearing it! Look for devices that:

- Are **comfortable to wear 24/7**, including in bed and the shower.
- **Do not feel bulky, stigmatizing, or embarrassing** to wear. Style matters regardless of age.
- **Minimize false alarms** that lead to frustration and refusal to wear.

**If you're not wearing it when you need it,
it doesn't matter what it looks like or what it costs.**



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Important Questions: **Will you be able to activate your device when you need help?**

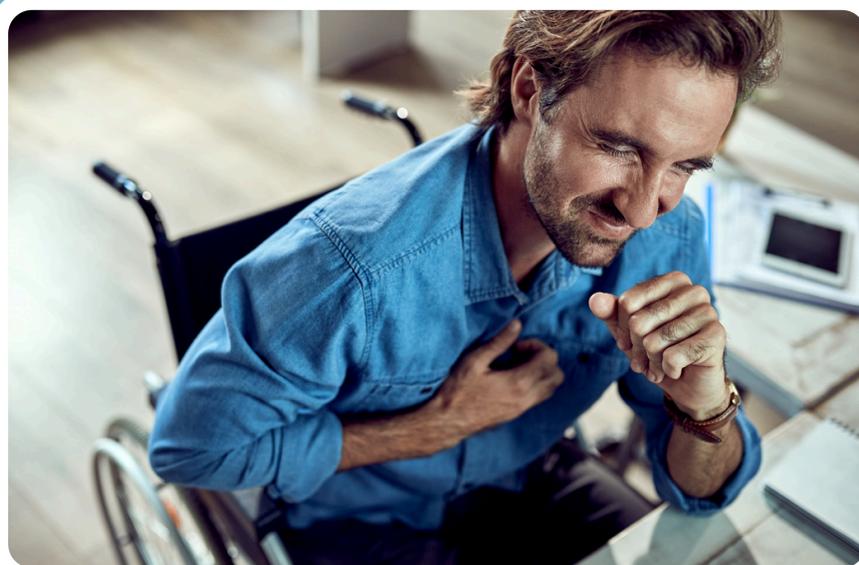
Two Ways to Trigger Help:

Manual Activation

- Press a button or use voice command.
- Must be easy to access in a stressful moment.
- Some devices support buttons *and* voice.

Automatic Fall Detection

- Crucial if you can't press a button after a fall.
- Accuracy varies. No fall detection is perfect.
- Remember to push your button if you need help but fall detection didn't go off!



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Important Questions: **Will it be Charged in an Emergency?**

Battery life can vary widely between medical alert devices—some need daily charging, while others can last several days or more on a single charge. Some systems such as smart speakers are plugged in and do not need to be charged.

Most devices use a docking station, which is simple but leaves you unprotected while the device charges. Some devices offer swappable batteries, which let you quickly replace a low battery without ever taking the device off, thereby giving you true 24/7 protection.



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Important Questions: **Who Will Respond to the Alert?**



24/7 Emergency Monitoring Center

The fastest and most reliable option connects you a trained operator that knows who you are (including door/gate codes, allergies, and chronic conditions), can assess the situation, can send emergency services if needed or notify family.

911 Connection

Many devices call 911 directly. While 911 operators can get you help, *response times vary greatly across jurisdictions* due to funding cuts and false alarm filtering. 911 also does not know who you are and cannot contact family members for minor emergencies.



Friends and Family

Some systems are designed to alert pre-selected family members or caregivers via call or text which can be more affordable, but *can be unreliable if contacts are unavailable or miss the alert.*

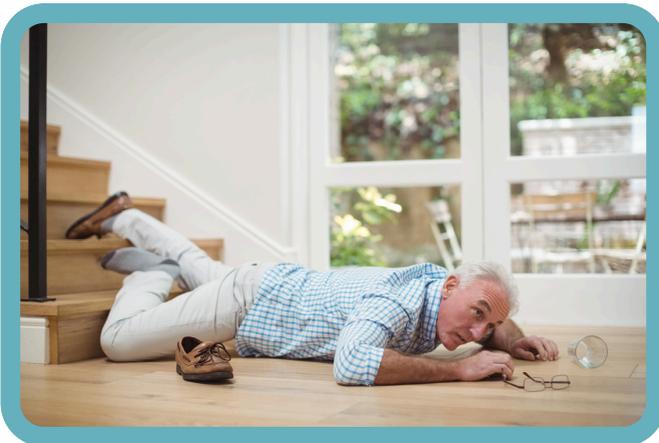
Choosing the right setup depends on your needs, risk level, and who you trust to respond quickly.

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Key Feature: Fall Detection

Fall detection is an essential feature, but it's important to understand how it works, and what to expect.

- **No system can detect every fall** with perfect accuracy.
- **Avoiding false alarms is just as crucial as catching real falls.** Look for devices with easy alert cancellation.
- Many pendant-style devices must be worn outside clothing to function properly.
- The best systems allow configurable sensitivity, rather than just an on/off switch.
- Some devices improve accuracy the longer you wear them, thanks to adaptive technology and product updates.



💡 **Did You Know:**
The Kanega Watch
is one of the few
medical alert devices
that is trained on real
falls from real seniors
for improved accuracy.

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Watch Out For: Pricing & Contracts

Medical alert system costs vary **significantly**. Here's some things to look out for:

- Some companies charge upfront for equipment, activation, or both. Many also require a **monthly service fee** for professional emergency monitoring.
- If you're leasing the device, be sure to return it when canceling to avoid extra charges.



- When comparing prices, watch out for **low teaser rates** that increase once essential features like fall detection are added.
- Look for companies that offer **trial periods** and clear refund policies, especially if you're prepaying for multiple months.
- **Avoid long-term contracts.** Some providers lock you in for up to three years that can only be cancelled due to death or entering assisted living.

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Watch Out For: Company Practices



When choosing a medical alert system, steer clear of **pushy sales tactics** and focus on companies that prioritize your needs and respect your time.

- Watch out for **high-pressure sales reps** who rush you into buying or discourage comparison shopping.
- Be cautious about **sharing your phone number**—especially if contact policies aren't clearly stated.
- Look for providers with **free customer support** via phone, email, and live chat.
- Support agents should be **friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful** with setup, troubleshooting, or cancellation.

A trustworthy company will stand behind its product and give you space to make an informed decision.

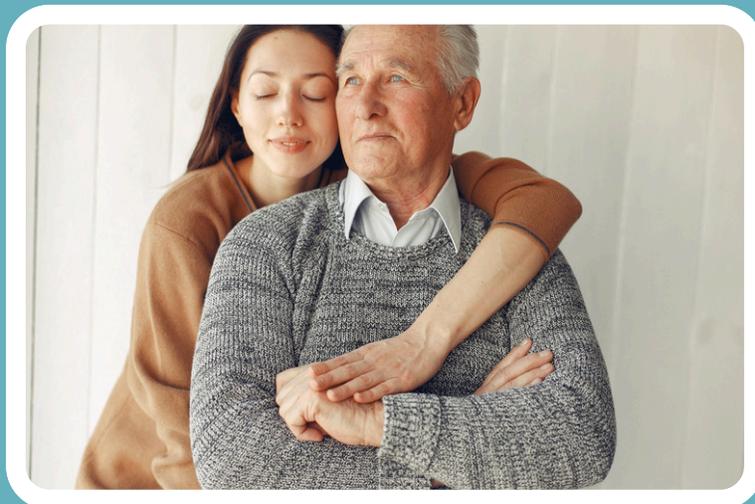
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Bonus Tip: Don't Forget to Involve Your Loved One

If you're purchasing a medical alert system for someone else, it's essential to **involve them in the decision-making process**. Surprising them with a device can backfire, as it touches on sensitive topics like independence and aging. Approach the conversation with empathy and the understanding that **the #1 fear of growing old is losing control over your own life**.

Focus on how the device can empower them to live more freely and safely, rather than highlighting vulnerability. Style matters too! Remember to help them choose something they'll *actually* be willing to wear.

Everyone is different. Patience and empathy go a long way.



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Summary & Final Tips

When choosing a medical alert system, prioritize choosing a device people will **wear regularly** and **that provides them protection wherever they go**. Steer clear of long-term contracts and high-pressure sales tactics, and always **involve the wearer** in the decision to ensure the device will actually be used. If possible, try out multiple systems during their trial periods to find the best fit. Ultimately, the right medical alert system should offer **freedom** and **peace of mind** for both the person wearing it, as well as those who care about them.

We hope this guide helped you better understand your options and you feel more confident in choosing the medical alert system that's the best choice for you or your loved one.

If you think a **discreet, all-in-one device with advanced safety features** sounds like the right fit, you might be interested in the Kanega Watch. It's designed for **comfort, independence**, and **24/7 protection**—without compromising style.

👉 **Click here to learn more
about the Kanega Watch**