



Medical Alert System Buyer's Guide:

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MEDICAL ALERT ADVICE

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A close-up portrait of Florence Henderson, a woman with short blonde hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and gold hoop earrings. She is smiling and has her hand near her chin. The background is a blurred indoor setting with windows and shelves.

Florence Henderson
Senior Safety Advocate & Client

MEDICAL GUARDIAN

The MG Buyer's Guide to Medical Alert Devices

Medical alert devices can help to keep you or your loved ones safe and protected in an emergency situation. In some cases, they can literally become the difference between life and death. While it may seem like a small purchase, buying a medical alert system can be overwhelming and confusing if you don't know the right questions to ask or the right things to look for in a medical alert company.

At Medical Guardian, our Life Safety Consultants field all different types of questions from customers like you everyday. We've compiled a list of questions that you should know the answers to before you purchase. After all, a savvy consumer is a happy consumer!

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PRICES

For many customers, price is their biggest concern when looking for a medical alert device. Bear in mind, however, that a low price usually doesn't mean the best service. A low price can also be a sign of hidden fees or potential scams. Here are the questions you should be asking to make sure you're protecting your wallet:

Do you have to sign a contract to get started?

Contracts are tricky because they often have a lot of legalese that you might not understand. There may be clauses that obligate you to commit to service for a specific amount of time, or that have hidden fees attached to it. If your medical alert device company of choice insists on having you sign a contract, we recommend having a lawyer read it for you before you commit.

Is there a price guarantee and rate increase after a few months?

A price guarantee locks in your price for the entire duration of your service. Companies who do not offer a price guarantee may raise your rates as they see fit, which can be quarterly or annually. You should also be wary of any company who offers a "low introductory rate" because that can mean that they will likely increase your price after a few months time.

What is the charge for activation?

An activation fee is typically a hidden charge that you find out about after purchase. Many companies who offer seemingly low rates for their medical alert systems tack on an added activation fee upon purchase.





PRICES

Are there any additional charges on top of the monthly rate?

Additional hidden charges can include equipment fees, which some companies charge upon shipment of your new purchase. There is no reason to pay for these additional charges, especially when there are many reputable companies who will provide this service for free.

What are your billing cycles like?

Many people like to have options when it comes to their billing cycles. Here at Medical Guardian we offer a month-to-month payment plan, a quarterly payment plan and an annual payment plan. This allows people the choice to pay as they see fit, or as their bank account allows. Most companies will offer discounts for customers who are willing to pay for one year in advance.

Refunds on long-term payments?

If you make a long-term payment for your medical alert device by paying for a year up front, what would the refund policy be if you need to cancel before that year is up? It's important to find out what the refund policy is before committing to a service so that you don't end up losing money in the long term.

MONITORING

Monitoring services are at the heart of the medical alert business. It's very important to learn about the monitoring centers that a medical alert device company works with in order to ensure that you will continue to have the best possible experience post-purchase.

Is it UL-certified?

Making sure that a monitoring center is UL-certified should be your first order of business. A Center that is UL-certified means that it has been recognized by the Underwriters Laboratories as having met the highest set of standards for safety and reliability.

Where is the monitoring center is located?

If a monitoring center is located outside of the US, it might help cut costs, but it won't be providing customers with the best possible service. Response has to be lightning fast and operators need to speak clearly and without language barriers over the device. When monitoring services are out sourced overseas, none of these amenities are guaranteed.

What if my parents speak a language other than English or Spanish?

That is a great question and one that our Life Safety Consultants hear often. Some medical alert device companies employ multi-lingual translators at their monitoring centers, but that's not the case across the boards. If your family requires multi-lingual options included with your monitoring services, be sure to ask this question ahead of purchase.





CUSTOMER SERVICE

A majority of your experience with a medical alert device company will happen post-purchase. Customer service and support play big roles in that experience. If having a stress-free customer service experience is of value you to you, then we recommend asking the following questions to medical alarm companies.

Is their Customer Service team in-house?

A company that outsources their Customer Service department ultimately does not have control over the way customers are handled. This can mean long wait times on the phone when you try to call in, rude customer service representatives or getting bounced around to different people instead of getting answers. A company who puts a premium on the customer experience is worth the investment.

Will your medical history be included in your profile?

While no company can require that you provide them with your medical history, we highly recommend that you inquire as to whether or not they offer this option to their customers. It can mean the difference between life and death in an emergency situation.

PRODUCT FEATURES

Since the equipment is the main component in a medical alert service, it's imperative that you have guarantees about its reliability and durability, as your life literally may depend on it.

Is there a warranty on the equipment?

If the company you are considering purchasing a medical alert device from does not include a warranty on their products, you should be wary. It's not unheard of for equipment to malfunction, have a defect, or run out of battery over time. Without a warranty, you may be faced with potential fees that can run into the hundreds of dollars.

Is there a back up battery in case of the power going out?

Just as it's impossible to predict when accidents might happen in your home, you can't predict the weather. Extreme weather such as snow storms, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornados and even strong rainstorms can all cause you to lose power in your home. And just because you lose power doesn't mean you should also lose the connection to an emergency monitoring center. Back up battery life can keep you protected in a potentially scary situation.

Do you offer a Lockbox for purchase?

While a Lockbox isn't a medical alert device, it is a valuable accessory that many companies offer as an add-on to their products. A Lockbox is a secure box that you can keep outside of your home. With a lock combination of your choosing, a Lockbox houses a spare set of your keys so that emergency responders will not have to break down your door should an emergency occur. A Lockbox can keep your home safe from unnecessary damage and save you hundreds of dollars.



PRODUCTS



CLASSIC GUARDIAN

This in-home system keeps you protected by connecting you to help through your existing telephone connection.

- No long term contracts
- No activation fee
- Range of 1300ft in every direction
- Water-Resistant necklace or wrist pendant
- Simple to use, Easy to install
- Emergency contacts already on file
- 32-hour battery life in case of power outage



HOME GUARDIAN

This in-home system wirelessly connects you to Medical Guardian emergency monitoring services to keep you protected.

- No Long Term Contracts
- No Activation Fee
- Range of 600ft in every direction
- Water-Resistant necklace or wrist pendant
- Easy-to-Use
- Emergency contacts already on file
- 30-hour battery life in case of power outage



MOBILE GUARDIAN

This GPS-enabled mobile solution will keep you safe and protected both at home and on the go.

- No Long Term Contracts
- No Activation Fee
- Travels with you wherever you go
- GPS tracks your exact location
- Water-Resistant Necklace
- 24-hour fully charged battery life
- Range of 350ft from base to unit



PREMIUM GUARDIAN

The latest technological advancement in the field, this mobile solution comes equipped with automatic fall detection. home and on the go.

- No long term contracts
- No activation fee
- Travels with you wherever you go
- Water-resistant
- 36-hour battery life
- GPS tracks your exact location
- Automatic Fall Detection



INSTALLATION

Installation of your medical alert device is a crucial part of the process. After all, if you can't install it, you can't use it to keep you protected.

Can I install the unit myself?

Having the ability to self-install and activate your own device should be the primary installation option offered by any company that you choose. Be very wary of any company that insists on installing the device in your home. That very well could be a scam where someone is trying to get into your home while you are vulnerable.

company provide me with support if I need help with the installation process?

Most companies will make customer support available to you over the phone to help walk you through the installation and activation process.

REVIEWS

Reviews from third party sites and existing customers are great ways to gauge what kind of experience you might have with a medical alert provider

Has your company been reviewed by customers on a third party website?

Customer reviews are the best way to get a feel for the company you are researching before you make a purchase. Third party review sites are not involved with the medical alert device companies directly, so all of their reviews are unbiased and truthful.

Is your company in good standing with the Better Business Bureau?

The BBB has been helping to keep businesses honest since 1912. Checking a company's rating with them before making a purchase is highly recommended.



Live a healthy
and safe life today.

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