

How to decide which medical alert best suits you?

Here are some key points to consider before making the final choice:

1. Lifestyle and Situational Needs

- How often are you out of the house?
- Are you usually accompanied when out of the house?
- Are you at risk of falling?

If you are at home most of the time and usually accompanied when out of the house, a home-based medical alert system would probably suffice. If you are at risk of fall, a system with fall detection is recommended regardless of whether it's a home-based or mobile system.

2. Service Provider

- Is the service provider specialized in monitored medical alert?
- Are they reputable and transparent with product details, pricing and support?
- How is the standard of customer service and technical support? How easy or difficult is it to get the help you need when you need it?
- What is their cancellation and return policy?

The medical alert is only as good as the support service backing it. Don't take their word for it; test it out yourself and call customer service and tech support with a prepared list of questions to see how well they are able to respond. Look up independent customer reviews on the internet as well.

4. Monitoring Center

- Where is the monitoring center located? Is the server that stores all personal information located here in Canada?
- What is the respond time when an alert is triggered?

5. Product Design

- How comfortable and wearable is the device? (Bulky? Unattractive? Heavy?)
- Is it limited to wearing on the neck or there flexibility, and can be worn on the waistband or as a wristwatch?
- How water resistant is the device? What is the IP rating? (IP stands for International Protection Rating, sometimes also interpreted as Ingress Protection Rating)

It is important that the user is comfortable with how the device looks and feels when worn. If not, the user is discouraged from using the device and not protected. If you are a caregiver it would be best to involve the user in the selection.

6. Battery Capacity

- How long does the battery last between charges?
- How long is recharging time?
- How quickly does the battery drain with full features enabled?
- Is there low battery monitoring and can it alert the caregiver?

It would be better user compliance if charging was required only once a day and it is best if battery life lasts the entire day and charging can be done at night. For those who tend to forget to charge their device, a low battery alert notification sent directly to the caregiver is ideal. Without being charged, the device will not be able to fully function and provide the intended protection.

It's All About You

It really is all about you! Pick a device type and service that suits your needs best. Don't be distracted by all the high-tech apps and functions if you don't need them and probably wouldn't use them anyway. Don't base your choices on those of your neighbor friend. Go for one that serves your present needs best.