

December 2017

Klickitat County Senior Newsletter

Klickitat County Senior Services
Goldendale 773-3757
White Salmon 493-3068



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How to Choose a Medical Alert System

A medical alert system — often referred to as a personal emergency response system (PERS), medical emergency response system (MERS) or fall monitor — can provide increased independence for our loved ones and peace of mind for family caregivers.

But how to select the one that's best for your situation?

It can be complicated: As technology advances, the range of options has grown from the basic, wearable device with a button to call a response center in case of emergency. Now systems may include fall detection or prevention, in-home health and well-being monitors, fitness trackers, movement sensors and more.

When selecting a medical alert system, start by evaluating your loved one's specific needs and abilities — both now and how they might change in the future. For example, if she has dementia, would she understand how to operate a system? Or is something automatic, like a fall-detection device, more appropriate? Does she have a disorder, such as aphasia, that will make communicating with a call center difficult?

Things to consider:

1. What you need the system to do



- **Call for help.** Wearable devices with buttons to push for help may connect to a live person or directly to emergency services (fire department, police).
- **Fall detection or prevention.** One in 3 people over age 65 fall every year — perhaps the most common motivator for obtaining a medical alert.
- **Medical monitoring.** Including medication reminders and monitoring health vitals
- **GPS location detection and tracking.** Useful if your loved one is still driving and relatively independent
- **Activity monitoring.** Motion detectors and beacons that track movement in the home
- **Daily check-in services.** Via a live person or electronic check-in
- **Fitness tracking.** Including built-in step counters and tools offering information, health challenges and virtual family connections
- **Home security monitoring.** For fire, smoke and carbon monoxide

How to Choose a Medical Alert System, continued



2. What type of equipment would work best

- **Is it wearable?** Is the device comfortable (beware of sharp edges or strap materials that may irritate fragile skin), and is it attractive or unobtrusive enough that your loved one will be willing to wear it?
 - **How waterproof is it?** Can it be worn in the shower? Can it be fully immersed in water in the sink or bathtub? Many falls happen in the bathroom and kitchen, so this is vital.
 - **What's its range, mobility and connectivity?** Ask about the distance the device will operate from the base unit. Will it work in the yard or garage? Does it include GPS so that it works anywhere you go in the community? Does it connect to a smartphone or via Bluetooth?
 - **Is it high quality?** Does the device have a good durability rating? Is the technology up to date?
 - **How's the battery life?** Also ask about the charging method and how you'll know if the battery is low.
 - **Will it need technology updates?** If so, ask how those are implemented (automatically or manually). Will you or your loved one have the ability to manage them?
 - **What are the logistics for setting it up?** If there's a base unit or console, will you need more than one to cover the entire home and yard? Should the unit sit on a table or be mounted on a wall? Does it require an electrical connection, or is it battery operated or backed up (in case electricity or phone service is lost). What type of phone service is required — cellular or landline, or both? Can you add stationary buttons around the home?
 - **Is it mobile?** If your loved ones move, can the system move with them?
 - **Does it include a lockbox?** Some companies offer to install a lockbox that emergency medical personnel can access if they need to enter the home when the resident is incapacitated.
- Can family members connect with the device?** Can you check in using a smartphone, tablet or computer?

3. Details regarding response and monitoring

- **Response center.** Average response time should be a matter of seconds, not minutes. Does the company operate its own response center or contract externally? Is the response center certified? How are the dispatchers or operators trained, and are they able to communicate in your loved one's preferred language? Will your loved one be able to talk with a live person via their wearable device, or do they need to be close to the base unit to be heard?
- **Call routing.** Can you designate how you want various types of alerts/calls (urgent, nonurgent, emergency) routed, including to a response center, family/friends or directly to emergency services (police, fire department)?
- **Customer service.** Quality customer relations are key. There should be a live person you can call 24/7 with questions about the service. Other options may include email, live chat, an easy-to-navigate website and a comprehensive FAQ section.
- **Cybersecurity.** How does the company protect private information and prevent hackers from accessing your system?

4. Cost

- **Fees.** Beware of complicated pricing plans and hidden fees. Look for a company with no extra fees related to equipment, shipping, installation, activation, or service and repair. Don't fall for scams that offer free service or "donated or used" equipment.

How to Choose a Medical Alert System, continued

- **Guarantee and cancellation policies.** Look for a full money-back guarantee, or at least a trial period, in case you are not satisfied with the service. And you'll want the ability to cancel at any time with no penalties (and a full refund if monthly fees have already been paid).
 - **Discounts.** Ask about discounts for multiple people in the same household, as well as for veterans, membership organizations, medical insurance or via a hospital, medical or care organization. Ask if the company offers any discount options or a sliding fee scale for people with lower incomes.
 - **Insurance.** For the most part, Medicare and private insurance companies will not cover the costs of a medical alert. In some states Medicaid may cover all or part of the cost. You can check with your private insurance company to see if it offers discounts or referrals.
- Tax deductions.** Check with your tax professional to find out if the cost of a medical alert is tax deductible as a medically necessary expense.

5. Availability in your area

Many national companies offer medical alert services, but they may not all be available near you, so call and inquire about service areas. Local companies may be an option, as well. In addition to companies that have been in the medical alert business for decades, technology companies and home security companies are now increasingly offering these services, as well.

- **Do an online search.** Use keywords such as “medical alert systems,” “personal emergency response systems,” “fall detection devices” and “urgent response devices,” along with the name of your city or state to find companies that service your area.
- **Contact your local area agency on aging.** Ask if it has a list of companies offering medical alert services locally. (I contacted mine, and it immediately emailed me a list of 16 national and local companies, including one that is offered through the area agency on aging. Find yours at eldercare.gov.)
- **Investigate other options.** Find out if there are any services or discounts offered through local or national membership organizations, veterans groups or the Department of Veterans Affairs, hospitals or community organizations.
- **See if you can add medical alert services to a current home security system.** Be sure to ask if there is an additional fee.
- **Research quality of services.** Investigate consumers' responses and reactions to the various companies and service options. Check with the Better Business Bureau, local or national consumer reporting agencies and websites, the local Chamber of Commerce, your state attorney general and other organizations that monitor the quality of services and complaints.

Get referrals. Ask friends and family members if they can recommend any medical alert systems they have used.

Once you've selected a system, be sure to monitor how it is working for you or your loved ones. Don't hesitate to switch to another service if it isn't a good fit — it could save a life.

Call Klickitat County Senior Services with questions or additional information.

Goldendale office 509-773-3757 White Salmon office 509-493-3068.

Dear Marci,



Dear Marci

I'd like to get screened for illnesses that I might be at risk for, but I'm confused about how Medicare payment works with preventive services. Can I get these services for free? How will I know if I'm covered?

Lance, Missoula, MT

Dear Lance,

Medicare, whether you have Original Medicare, covers many preventive services at 100% for people who meet basic eligibility requirements. If you have Original Medicare, Part B will cover services recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task force with no deductible or coinsurance, as long as your doctor accepts assignment.

Not every preventive service is covered at 100% for every Medicare beneficiary, though. In some cases, you may have to pay a coinsurance or copayment for your preventive service or related services.

Here are some things to keep in mind about Medicare coverage of preventive services:

- Some preventive services are covered under Part B, but have normal cost-sharing. This means that if you receive one of these services, you will be responsible for paying your deductible, as well as the 20% Part B coinsurance.
- Sometimes there are additional fees associated with visits for preventive services. For example, if the facility you go to has a separate facility fee, this will not be covered at 100%, meaning you will have to pay a coinsurance for the facility fee. Another example is if you see a doctor before or after you receive a preventive service. That visit is separate from the preventative service, and you will be responsible for the part of the cost of the visit that isn't a preventive service.
- If your visit includes diagnostic or treatment related services, you will pay normal cost-sharing for those services. A service is considered preventive if you have no prior symptoms of the disease that the service is seeking to prevent, whereas a diagnostic service addresses symptoms or conditions that you already have. For example, if you go to the doctor for a colonoscopy (a preventive service), but your doctor finds or removes a polyp during the colonoscopy, the removal is diagnostic. You will be responsible for a deductible and/or a copay or coinsurance for the polyp removal. Similarly, if you go to your doctor for your Annual Wellness Visit (a preventive service), but your doctor treats a symptom you're experiencing (a diagnostic service) during the same visit, you will be responsible for cost-sharing for services not related to the Annual Wellness Visit.





Speak with your doctor before you receive a service to make sure that you meet guidelines for gender, age, and certain risk factors.

Speak with your provider to find out which preventive services they believe you should have and to discuss your eligibility for them. To find out if Medicare covers your test, service, or item, call 1-800-MEDICARE.

-Marci

White Salmon Events December 2017








Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
MUSIC 12/4 Simcoe Boys 12/6 Huskey Family	12/11 Old Time Friends 12/13 Simcoe Boys 12/18 Simcoe Boys	12/20 Andre & Band 12/25 OFFICE CLOSED 12/27 Simcoe Boys			1	2
3	4 9:30 Exercise 11am Live Music & Dance	5 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga 2pm Strong Women	6 9:30 Exercise 11am Live Music & Dance	7 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga Noon Pinochle 2pm Strong Women		9
10	11 9:30 Exercise 11am Live Music & Dance	12 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga 2pm Strong Women	13 9:30 Exercise 11am Live Music & Dance	14 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga Noon Pinochle 2pm Strong Women	15	16
17	18 9:30 Exercise 11am Live Music & Dance	19 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga 2pm Strong Women	20 9:30 Exercise 11am Live Music & Dance	21 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga Noon Pinochle 2pm Strong Women	22	23
24 31	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Office Closed 	26 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga 2pm Strong Women	27 9:30 Exercise 11am Live Music & Dance	28 8:30 to 9:30 Hatha Yoga 2pm Strong Women	29	

Goldendale Events

December 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Golden- dale Food Bank is open Mon/ Tues and Thursday 10am	Shopping trips are provided by Mt. Adams Transportation, call to be placed on the list. 773- 3060	MUSIC 12/14 Simcoe Boys 12/21 Jackie	12/28 Simcoe Boys		1 Noon Pinochle	2 Christmas Bazaar Goldendale Senior Center 9am to 3pm
3	4 	5 1pm Exercise	6	7 1pm Exercise 1pm Bingo Sr Ctr Only members	8 Hood River Shopping Noon Pinochle	9 
10	11	12 10am Toenail Care 1pm Exercise	13 10:30am Caregiver Support Group	14 1pm Exercise 1pm Bingo	15 Noon Pinochle	16 SR Breakfast \$3pp
17 	18	19 1pm Exercise	20 	21 1pm Exercise 1pm Bingo	22 The Dalles Shopping Noon Pinochle	23
24	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 1pm Exercise	27	28 1pm Exercise 1pm Bingo	29 Noon Pinochle	30
31	CHRISTMAS DAY 					

DECEMBER MENU 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Meals are Subject to Change				1	2 Lyle Breakfast 7am to 10am \$7 Adults, Children (6-12)\$4,
3	4 WS BBQ Beef Sandwich 	5 GD & Lyle BBQ Beef Sandwich	6 WS Chicken Cacciatore 	7 GD Chicken Cacciatore	8	9 
10	11 WS Italian Bake	12 GD & Lyle Italian Bake 	13 WS Baked Chicken 	14 GD: Baked Chicken Trout Lake: Ham & Au Gratin Potatoes	15	16 GD Senior Breakfast 9am \$3pp
17	18 Country Steak 	19 GD & Lyle Country Steak	20 WS Baked Ham 	21 GD: Baked Ham Klickitat: Pork Roast	22	23 
24 31	25 OFFICE CLOSED CHRISTMAS	26 GD & Lyle Cook's Choice	27 WS Swedish Meatballs	28 GD Swedish Meatballs	29	30

Klickitat County Senior Meal Site Locations

- **WHITE SALMON: Every Monday & Wednesday at noon @ the Pioneer Center, 501 NE Washington St., White Salmon.**
- **LYLE: Every Tuesday at Noon @ Lyle Lions Community Center**
- **BICKLETON: The 2nd & 4th Tuesday at 11:30am Market Street Café**
- **GOLDENDALE: Every Tuesday & Thursday at Noon @ Goldendale Senior Center--115 E Main Street, Goldendale.**
- **TROUT LAKE: 2nd Thursday, December 14th at 5:30pm at Trout Lake School.**
- **KLICKITAT: Thursday, December 21st at 12-Noon at the Klickitat Community Center.**

Volunteer Hours



Each snowflake brings to mind how special you are. You're One of a Kind. Thank you volunteers!

Energizing Support Groups

Goldendale Caregiver Support Group

Second Wednesday, December 13th 10:30am at the Goldendale Senior Center.

509-773-3757



OCTOBER HOURS

TRANSPORTATION	644	Hours
NUTRITION	883	Hours
NEWSLETTER	24	Hours
SR. EXERCISE	13	Hours
MUSICIANS	18	Hours

Members Needed for

Klickitat County Senior Advisory Board

The Klickitat County Senior Advisory Board is a Board of Klickitat County residents who are appointed by the County Commissioners. Members are appointed from each commissioner's district. At least 51% of the Advisory Board members must be over 60 years old.

The purpose of the Senior Advisory Board is to represent the interests of the senior citizens of Klickitat County, and assure that proper program planning, budgeting, administration, and evaluation are carried out for the best interest of the Klickitat County Senior Citizens.

The Advisory Board provides advice and guidance in program and policy matters to the Director of Senior Services and/or the Board of County Commissioners at their request.

The Advisory Board acts as advocates for all senior citizens of Klickitat County and for the programs which serve them.

The Advisory Board currently holds a regular monthly meeting on the 1st Friday of each month at 10:30am at the Dallesport Community Center.

New members are needed. If you are interested in submitting your name for membership or would like more information please contact:

Sharon Carter, Director of Klickitat County Senior Services at 509-773-3757 or 509-493-3068 or email at sharonc@klickitatcounty.org.

Are you a caregiver for a family member with dementia? Would you like to learn about coping with your family member's bothersome behaviors?

Consider joining our Tele-STAR study!

Study participation includes:

- 1 preliminary and 2 follow-up telehealth visits with an OHSU study team member
- 8 visits to learn the Tele-STAR program for managing challenging dementia behaviors. These visits will be in your home via telehealth (consultants will connect with you on your computer, iPad, or other device with internet capability)
- 2 follow-up telephone calls
- 1 telehealth meeting with 2 other participants
- Brief online surveys and an optional focus group

You may be eligible if:

- You are a caregiver for a family member with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia
- Your family member has 3 or more bothersome behaviors (for example, asking the same question over and over, pacing, or refusing help with personal care)
- You or your family member has a computer, iPad, or other device with a reliable internet connection

For more information, contact

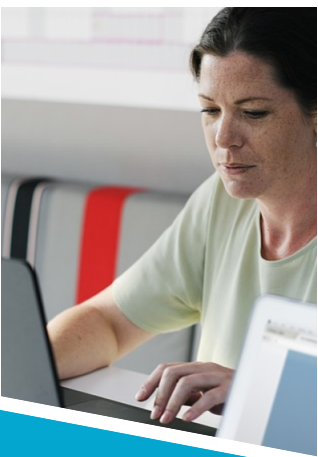
Dr. Allison Lindauer at

lindauer@ohsu.edu or 503-494-7647

PI: Dr. Allison Lindauer | OHSU IRB # 17526



OHSU researchers are working to understand how telehealth (video-chat technology, much like Skype) can be used to help caregivers for people with dementia, and we are looking for family caregivers to help us.



What is the Tele-Savvy Study?

A clinical trial of an on-line education program for dementia caregivers.

Caregiver Training

During the program, you will receive caregiver training in the following areas:

Dementing Illnesses

- Stages
- Causes
- Signs and Symptoms
- Disease Management

Environmental changes to enhance quality of life for you as a caregiver and your person living with dementia

Caregiving Strategies

Self-Care for the Caregiver

Why Tele-Savvy?

Caregiving is a demanding and stressful role. Caregivers need training to optimize their person's and their personal quality of life.

Many skills can be learned to decrease caregiver burden, stress, and the severity of dementia symptoms experienced by their person.

This program is conveniently offered online on weekdays and weekends.

We make it easy to participate with life tech support at every step of the program.

Sessions in the program are designed and led by experts in dementing illnesses

You will be meeting with other dementia caregivers throughout your time in the program.

What will I do as a participant?

You will participate in a 6-week online program that includes weekly video conferences and online video lessons.

You will complete up to 6 interviews over the course of 12 months. These interviews are focused on understanding your caregiving experience.

How much time do I need to commit to participating?

Weekly teleconferences—Up to 90 minutes on a regularly scheduled day of the week (weekday or weekend).

Daily Video Lessons—Up to 15 minutes daily. These videos will be emailed to you and may be watched on your own schedule as time permits.

Interviews—Study related interviews will be conducted up to 6 times throughout the program. They are scheduled roughly every 3 months and will be limited to 60 minutes.

What do I need to participate?

You will need a computer or mobile device with internet. Webcams may be provided if needed.

New to videoconferencing?

Program uses a simple, introductory level program for video conferences.

Research assistants will be available for help at all stages.

What if I start and cannot finish?

This is a voluntary study. You can stop at any time. There are no penalties for discontinuing participation.

I'm Interested! Now what?

Contact: Natasha Spoden, Site Coordinator

OHSU Layton Aging & Alzheimer's Disease Center

503-494-6370 or spoden@ohsu.edu





Adverse Winter Weather may result in Senior Meal or Activity Cancellations or schedule changes with Mt. Adams Transportation

Please listen to your local radio stations, KVGDLP Goldendale FM100.1, KLCK 1400AM, & KIHHR 1340AM, Y102 FM, KACI 1300 AM to find out about a cancellation or call our senior services office:

Goldendale 773-3757, White Salmon 493-3068.

During adverse weather we may also have to cancel transportation trips if the roads are very hazardous or change pick up times to accommodate for the weather or road conditions. Please keep in mind that our drivers must be able to access your driveway safely. We do not have all wheel drive vehicles. If you have questions about your trip or issues with access to your home please let us know.

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

White Salmon, WA 98672

Permit #77

Klickitat County Senior Services

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