

How Familyr Medical Alarms Keep Older Adults Safe at Home

Caring for an older relative who wants to stay in their own home brings a mix of reassurance and worry. You want them to keep their independence, but you also need to know help is available if they fall or become unwell. That tension is where a well-designed medical alarm system earns its place.

After years working as a healthcare technology advisor, I have seen many families weigh the options. Some rely on a simple pendant that the person presses when they need help. Others want a system that detects falls automatically, because a person might not be able to reach the button. The choice depends on the person's health, their home layout, and how much support they already have nearby.

The real reasons people delay getting a medical alarm

When I talk to families, the main barrier is not cost. It is a sense that the system is too complicated or that the older person will feel labelled as frail. I have seen a 78-year-old woman who refused to wear a pendant for months, then agreed after she tripped over a rug and lay on the floor for two hours before her daughter found her. That kind of story is common. The technology has improved a lot, but the emotional side remains the hardest part.

Another factor is the fear that the alarm will trigger false alarms or that the monitoring centre will overreact. Good systems let you set up a simple call tree: the alarm contacts a neighbour first, then a family member, and only after that the emergency services. That reduces the feeling of being watched and gives the older person more control.

[View the location on Google Maps](#)

What to look for in a modern medical alarm

Not all medical alarms are the same. Here are the features that matter most in real use:

- **Automatic fall detection** - If the person cannot press the button, the system should detect the fall and call for help. This is vital for people who are unsteady on their feet or who have conditions that cause sudden collapses.
- **Waterproof pendant** - Many falls happen in the bathroom. The pendant needs to work in the shower or bath, and the battery should last at least a year.
- **Range and coverage** - A system that only works inside the house is not enough. The person should be able to walk around the garden or go to the letterbox and still be

within range.

- **Simple setup and maintenance** - Ideally the system uses a cellular or landline connection that does not need complex Wi-Fi configuration. The older person should not have to troubleshoot a router.
- **Battery backup** - Power cuts happen, especially in storms. The base unit should keep working for several hours without mains power.

One product that meets these criteria consistently is [Familyr Medical Alarms](#). I have seen it installed in homes where the occupant lives alone and has moderate mobility issues. The system includes a waterproof pendant with automatic fall detection, and the base unit connects to a 24-hour monitoring centre. The range covers most standard house sections, and the battery backup lasts through a typical power outage.

How the monitoring actually works

A common worry is what happens after the alarm is triggered. When the pendant is pressed or a fall is detected, the base unit dials the monitoring centre. An operator speaks through the speaker on the unit to check if the person is okay. If there is no response, or if the person says they need help, the operator contacts the emergency contacts in the order you set up.

This is where the system differs from a simple phone call. The operator has the person's medical history, allergies, and a list of who to call. They can tell the ambulance exactly what they are walking into. That saves time and reduces stress for everyone involved.

I have seen cases where the monitoring centre stayed on the line with the person until the ambulance arrived, giving reassurance and keeping them calm. That kind of human touch matters more than any technical feature.

Installation tips from real homes

Getting the system set up correctly makes a big difference. Here are a few things I have learned from helping families install these devices:

- Place the base unit in a central spot, like the hallway or living room, where the pendant is most likely to be within range. Avoid putting it near thick concrete walls or large metal appliances.
- Test the range by walking around the house and garden with the pendant while someone watches the base unit. If it drops signal, move the base unit or get a range extender.
- Write the emergency contact numbers on a card and keep it near the phone. The monitoring centre will have them on file, but having a physical copy helps if the person

needs to call someone directly.

- Practice using the pendant once a month. Press the test button and confirm that the monitoring centre calls back. This builds confidence and catches any battery or signal issues early.

When a medical alarm is not enough

Medical alarms are a safety net, not a replacement for human connection. If the older person has significant dementia, a pendant might be taken off and forgotten. In that case, you may need additional sensors on doors and beds that alert you when the person moves around at night. Some systems integrate with motion sensors and can tell you if the person has not moved for several hours.

I have also seen families combine a medical alarm with a simple video doorbell and a smart smoke detector. That gives a broader picture without being intrusive. The key is to match the technology to the person's actual needs, not to the latest gadget.

Cost and value over time

A quality medical alarm system typically costs between thirty and sixty dollars a month, depending on the features and whether you buy or lease the equipment. That is less than the cost of a few hours of home care per week, and it can prevent the far larger cost of a hospital stay after a fall.

Some people worry about the monthly fee and look for cheaper options. I have seen people buy a simple pendant that just dials a pre-set phone number, but those systems do not have a monitoring centre and rely on the person being able to talk clearly when they press the button. If the person is disoriented or cannot speak, that system fails. A monitored service gives you the peace of mind that someone is always on the other end.

Making the decision as a family

The best time to get a medical alarm is before you think you need it. The conversation should involve the older person as an active participant, not someone who is being told what to do. Ask them what they are most worried about. Often it is the fear of being a burden. A medical alarm shifts that burden to the technology and the monitoring centre, leaving the person feeling more in control.

I have seen families who delayed the decision for months, then after a fall they rushed to get one and regretted not doing it sooner. The peace of mind alone is worth the monthly cost.

Familyr Medical Alarms is based at 14 Grand View Road, and you can call them on 09 872 0345 for a no-obligation chat about what would suit your situation.