



# Comparing the Best Medical Alert Systems for Seniors

Medical emergencies and falls can happen without warning at any time and family members and friends may not always be able to be with their loved one when they're needed most. Older adults and their caregivers feel a great relief knowing that help is always just a push of a button away. Seniors are able to feel safer and more relaxed knowing they can pursue their independent, active lifestyles and remain in their own homes, confident that assistance is always available if they need it.

[+ Read more](#)





## 5 Best Medical Alert Systems: Which One To Choose?



Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

1-866-784-1992

Email

	 Lifeline	 Life Assure	 Telus	 Red Dot Alerts
Exclusive focus on seniors	✓	✓	✗	✓
Standard help at the push of a button	✓	✓	✓	✓
Automatic fall detection	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobile service	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number of mobile locating technologies	6 (including GPS)	GPS only	GPS only	2 (including GPS)
Help button formats	Pendant, wristband	Pendant, wristband	Pendant, wristband	Pendant, wristband
Range for non-mobile help buttons	250-300 ft.	600 ft.	600 ft.	400 ft.
Two-way voice communication	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobile help button can be charged while wearing	✓	✗	✗	✗
Home Wireless Options	✓	✓	✓	✗

Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

📞 1-866-784-1992

✉ Email

	 Lifeline	 Life Assure	 Telus	 Red Dot Alerts
Canadian Response Centre	Company owned	3-rd party Outsourced	3-rd party Outsourced	Company owned
Number of languages	240	2 (Eng., Fr.)	5 (English, French, Punjabi, Cantonese and Mandarin)	2 (Eng., Fr.)
Follow up to make sure help has arrived	✓	✓	✓	✓
Professional home installation	✓	✗	✗	✗
Battery backup	✓	✓	✓	✓
No equipment to buy	✓	✓	✓	Mobile service requires a purchase
Free maintenance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Automatic notification if equipment needs servicing	✓	✗	✓	✓
No long-term contract	✓	✓	✓	✓

Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

## Lifeline (Recommended)



Lifeline was the original personal alert service in North America, developed and started in 1974 by a husband and wife team of gerontologists. It quickly gained a reputation as a ground-breaking service that helped older adults maintain safety and independence in their own homes. After years of growth as the leading service of its kind, Lifeline was purchased in 2006 by Philips Healthcare, a division of the well-known Dutch electronics company, Koninklijke Philips N.V.

Today, Lifeline is still the largest and most trusted medical alert system in Canada and continues to serve only the needs of older adults and the chronically ill. The caring, expert and highly trained Response Centre Associates at the company's two Canadian Response Centres and its innovative, dependable products make it hard to beat.



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

detection service available for seniors who fear or are at risk for falling; and the GoSafe mobile service that allows older adults to enjoy their independence safely with access to 24/7 emergency help and fall detection anywhere, anytime with up to six locating technologies available. The classic and fall detection services are also available in wireless versions for people without a landline. When a help call is received at its two Canadian Response Centres, Lifeline will contact a family member and/or friend according to instructions the customer has provided previously. If the situation requires emergency medical treatment, Lifeline uses its contacts with emergency services to dispatch help to the customer quickly. Lifeline keeps a confidential medical history supplied by the customer on record to help first responders when assessing an emergency situation.

Lifeline prides itself on providing premium medical alert services at a competitive month-to-month cost with no contract. Its services are available through a large network of reputable local community agencies and healthcare partnerships across Canada.

## Lifeline Pros and Cons:

### PROS

- ✓ **Chosen by more Canadians than any other medical alert service** because it provides premium quality and service at a competitive cost.
- ✓ **Exclusive focus on older adults:** Lifeline's sole focus is on the needs of seniors and the chronically ill. It does not also act as a burglar alarm, fire alarm or elevator service monitoring service.



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

for landline and HomeSafe for wireless are the standard services, HomeSafe with AutoAlert for landline and for wireless offer automatic fall detection, and the GoSafe mobile service.

- ✓ **Dependable, senior-friendly products** are manufactured by Lifeline to high quality standards.  
No landline required: Lifeline products are available for landlines or wireless service and in many cases are compatible with cable/VoIP.
- ✓ **All help calls are answered in Canada 24/7** at one of Lifeline's two Response Centres.
- ✓ **Fast, expert, caring emergency responders:** Response Centre Associates are hand-picked for their caring customer service skills and receive 240 hours of training on the emergency needs of older adults, plus annual recertification.
- ✓ **Multilingual:** Lifeline helps its customers not just in English and French, but in any of 170 different languages.
- ✓ **Excellent automatic fall detection system:** Lifeline's industry-leading HomeSafe with AutoAlert is Canada's most accurate automatic fall detection system, able to correctly identify 95% of true falls.
- ✓ **Fall detection help calls can be cancelled:** Customers have 30 seconds to move or press their help button to cancel an unnecessary help call.
- ✓ **Up to six ways to locate a customer who needs help:** Lifeline's GoSafe mobile service is the only medical alert service that uses up to six locating technologies so that customers can be located if they need help.
- ✓ **Excellent two-way voice communication** is included with all Lifeline services.



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

- ✓ **Follows customer preferences:** Lifeline allows customers to specify the response they want for their help calls: by calling a family member, a friend or emergency services.
- ✓ **Follow-up:** Lifeline always follows up on help calls to make sure customers are receiving the help they need.
- ✓ **Convenience and ease of use:** Lifeline's senior-friendly products and services are designed with an older adult's convenience in mind, such as the GoSafe mobile help button pendant which can be charged while wearing it so that protection is always close at hand.
- ✓ **Safety:** All Lifeline help buttons have breakaway cords for customer safety.
- ✓ **Battery backup** in case of a power outage.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ **Attractive, lightweight, discreet pendant and wristband help button devices.**
- ✓ **No equipment to buy:** Lifeline's equipment is included in its monthly fee.
- ✓ **Free maintenance:** There is no cost to the customer for maintaining the Lifeline system. The equipment automatically notifies Lifeline if service is required. Replacement equipment is supplied to the customer free of charge and the product needing replacement is returned to Lifeline free of charge using a pre-paid label supplied to the customer.
- ✓ **No long-term contract:** Lifeline's fee is paid on a month-to-month basis with no long-term commitment.
- ✓ **Professional home installation:** Lifeline's Home Service Representatives install your system for you when possible. Otherwise, expert telephone guidance is provided. ↑

Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

📞 1-866-784-1992

✉ Email

- ✓ **Supporting Canada's healthcare system:** Lifeline Canada has reinvested more than \$22 million in Canada's healthcare system since 2004 through more than 250 programs with hospitals and community agencies.

## CONS

- ✗ **Help button range:** The signal from Lifeline's HomeSafe help buttons is 250-300 feet, enough to cover approximately two football fields, more than enough for the home use these help buttons are intended for. The GoSafe mobile help button's coverage depends only on the wireless carrier's range.
- ✗ **No customer portal:** Customers must contact Lifeline in order to make changes to their account or service.

## Life Assure



Life and Home Security Group Inc. (doing business as Life Assure Medical Alert) is based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, providing personal emergency response services for seniors. Like all medical alert service providers, it gives

Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

☎ 1-866-784-1992

✉ Email



service, “Premium Mobile Plus +”. Automatic fall detection is an add-on for all services.

## Life Assure Pros and Cons:

### PROS

- ✓ **Homegrown:** Life Assure is a Canadian company.
- ✓ **Focus:** Life Assure focuses only on the needs of seniors.
- ✓ **Two services offered:** \* Life Assure offers a “Classic Home” service (works with any kind of landline) and a “Premium Mobile Plus +” service. Automatic fall detection is offered as an add-on.
- ✓ **Help button coverage:** Life Assure’s help buttons have a range of up to 600 feet. Its mobile service coverage is only restricted by the cellular carrier’s range.
- ✓ **Help calls are answered in Canada 24/7** at Life Assure’s third party monitoring centre.
- ✓ **Two-way voice communication** is provided with all Life Assure services.
- ✓ **Bilingual:** Life Assure’s third party call centre answers help calls in English and French.
- ✓ **No landline required:** Life Assure services can work using VoIP/cable.
- ✓ **Battery backup** in case of a power outage.
- ✓ **Modestly priced:** Life Assure’s pricing is below average.



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

## CONS

- ✘ **Third party monitoring:** Life Assure's third party call centre also handles burglar and security guard alarms which are very different than help calls from seniors.
- ✘ **No home installation:** The customer must install Life Assure's product themselves or with telephone help.
- ✘ **Less accurate automatic fall detection:** Life Assure's automatic fall detection add-on measures movement in any direction, not just vertically, potentially leading to more false alarms.
- ✘ **Only one locating technology is used for mobile:** Life Assure's Premium Mobile Plus + service only uses GPS to locate a customer in need of help. There are many situations where GPS is not effective, for example if the signal is blocked by large objects, terrain or dense materials.
- ✘ **Mobile pendent cannot be charged while wearing it:** The help button pendent must be plugged into a charging cradle which is plugged into a wall socket.
- ✘ **No breakaway cord:** The "Classic" help button does not have a breakaway cord for safety.

Related: [Life Assure \(In-depth 2022 Review\)](#)

## Telus LivingWell Companion



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email



Telus LivingWell Companion is a medical alert service offered by the Telus corporation through its Telus Healthcare division. Telus created LivingWell Companion by acquiring part of AlarmForce from Bell Canada in 2018, and DirectAlert in 2020. It now offers two services: Companion Home for use at home, and Companion Go, its mobile service. Fall detection is optional with Companion Home and standard with Companion Go. Telus claims to be the lowest-priced medical alert service in Canada. When an alert call is received at Telus' third-party monitoring centre, up to three family members or friends can be contacted. If the three contacts cannot be reached or the situation warrants it, Telus will contact emergency services.

## Telus LivingWell Companion Pros and Cons:

### PROS

- ✓ Canadian: Telus is a Canadian corporation.
- ✓ Focus: Telus LivingWell Companion is only focused on seniors but its third party monitoring centre also handles other types of calls such as burglar alarms, fire panel monitoring and elevator monitoring. ↑

Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

☎ 1-866-784-1992

✉ Email

- ✓ Help button coverage: Telus help buttons have a range of up to 600 feet. Its mobile service coverage is only restricted by cellular range.
- ✓ Two-way voice communication is provided with all Telus LivingWell Companion services.
- ✓ Bilingual: Telus' third party call centre can answer help calls in English, French, Punjabi, Cantonese and Mandarin.
- ✓ No landline required.
- ✓ Low price: Telus claims to be the lowest-priced medical alert service on the market.
- ✓ No equipment to buy: The cost of equipment is included in the monthly fee.
- ✓ No long-term contract.

## CONS

- ✗ Third party monitoring: Telus LivingWell Companion uses a third party call centre that also handles other types of calls such as burglar alarms, fire panel monitoring and elevator monitoring.
- ✗ Only one locating technology for mobile: The Companion Go service only uses GPS to locate a customer in need of help. GPS can't be effective when, for example, a satellite is not overhead at the time or the signal is blocked by large objects, terrain or dense materials.
- ✗ Large pendants: Telus pendants are larger than average.
- ✗ Mobile product cannot be charged while wearing it: The help button



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

- ✘ No home installation: The customer must install Telus' product alone or with telephone help.

Related: [Telus Medical Alert vs Lifeline: Which One Is Better?](#)

## Red Dot Personal Alert Solutions



Red Dot was started in 2018 by Bruyère, an Ottawa research, primary care, long-term care and palliative care services company, in partnership with FCI Communications, a commercial security, technology and telecom company. Red Dot claims to be the only medical alert system created by elderly care specialists, although industry-leader Lifeline was started earlier by elder care specialists – a husband and wife gerontologist team. Red Dot offers three ↑

Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

☎ 1-866-784-1992

✉ Email

calls are monitored in Canada by a bilingual (English and French) monitoring centre.

## Red Dot Pros and Cons:

### PROS

- ✓ Nationality: Red Dot is based in Ottawa, Canada.
- ✓ Focus: Red Dot focuses only on the needs of seniors.
- ✓ Services: Red Dot offers three services: Two at-home services (one with fall detection) and a mobile service.
- ✓ Help button coverage: Red Dot's at-home help buttons have a range of up to 400 metres. Its mobile service coverage is only restricted by the cellular carrier's range.
- ✓ Help calls are answered in Canada 24/7 at Red Dot's bilingual monitoring centre.
- ✓ Monitoring staff are certified by the Underwriters Laboratories of Canada.
- ✓ Two-way voice communication is provided with all Red Dot services.
- ✓ Battery backup for up to 36 hours in case of a power outage.
- ✓ No installation fee with self installation.
- ✓ Modestly priced: Red Dot's pricing is competitive.
- ✓ No long-term contract.



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

- ✘ Landline required: Red Dot's at-home services are not wireless and do not work with VoIP/cable.
- ✘ Purchase required: Red Dot's mobile service pricing requires a purchase plus a monthly fee.
- ✘ Only two locating technologies for mobile service: Red Dot's mobile service only uses GPS and cellular signal technologies to locate you if you push your help button or fall. There are many situations where GPS is not effective, for example if the signal is blocked by large objects, terrain or dense materials.
- ✘ Mobile pendent cannot be charged while wearing it: The help button pendent must be in a charging cradle which is plugged into a wall socket.
- ✘ No breakaway cord: Red Dot help button pendants do not have a breakaway cord for safety.

## Bedford Medical Alert



Bedford Medical Alert Inc. is a family owned and operated Canadian



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

the-push-of-a-button service is offered as a necklace, plus a Home Freedom Minis service offered in smaller necklace and bracelet formats, and the Home Freedom Fall Detection service which comes only as a necklace. Bedford's Go Anywhere<sup>®</sup> service uses GPS technology to help a user in the community or at home access help. Bedford shares its Canadian multilingual monitoring centres with its owner's security alarm company.

## Bedford Medical Alert Pros and Cons:

### PROS

- ✓ Home base: Bedford is a Canadian company based in Toronto.
- ✓ Focus: Bedford focuses only on the needs of seniors.
- ✓ Services: Four PERS services are offered: a basic 24/7 service called Home Freedom Pendant, Home Freedom Minis in bracelet and smaller pendant formats, Home Freedom Fall Detection with automatic fall detection, and Go Anywhere<sup>®</sup>, the company's mobile service using GPS.
- ✓ Help button coverage: Bedford does not specify the range of its Home Freedom help buttons except to say that it is "long" enough to cover an average-sized single family home including yard. Go Freedom help buttons can work anywhere as long as there is cellular coverage.
- ✓ Help calls are answered in Canada 24/7 at Bedford's call centres.
- ✓ Two-way voice communication is provided with all Bedford services.
- ✓ Breakaway cord: Bedford's necklace help buttons have a breakaway cord for safety.

Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email



✓ No long-term contract.

## CONS

- ✗ Only GPS is used for Go Anywhere: There are many situations where GPS is not effective, for example if the signal is blocked by large objects, terrain or dense materials.
- ✗ Go Anywhere necklace cannot be charged while wearing: The necklace must be in a charging cradle which is plugged into a wall socket.
- ✗ Bedford's help calls are answered by the same people who answer its owner's security alarm company's calls.
- ✗ Monitoring staff training is not specified by Bedford except to say that staff are "specifically vetted to work with seniors and vulnerable populations."

# The Right Medical Alert System For Seniors

Medical alert systems provide priceless peace of mind to loved ones and caregivers.

## What are medical alert systems?

Medical alert systems, otherwise known as personal emergency response 

Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

button is pushed, it triggers the communicator base unit to place a help call to a monitoring centre. The person wearing the help button can communicate directly with someone at the monitoring centre who in some cases can access a medical history provided previously by the wearer. The wearer's emergency situation is quickly assessed, and the appropriate help is dispatched to the injured or disabled wearer.

Enhanced services are available that allow the monitoring centre to automatically receive a help call if the help button pendant detects a fall (wristbands are not effective at detecting true falls) and the wearer is not able to push their help button themselves. Mobile medical alert services are also available that extend the same help button and automatic fall detection capability outside the home. Mobile services are only available as pendants and do not require a communicator base unit. Mobile help calls are transmitted using a cellular signal that also allows two-way voice communication.

There are several medical alert companies and help buttons available in Canada for a monthly cost, but not all of them are created equal. In this article, we want to provide the information you need to choose the medical alert system that is best for you.

**Related:** [Is it time for a Medical Alert Service?](#)

## 1. What to Consider in a Medical Alert System



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

the go? Your daily routine will help you understand the medical alert system you need. For example, if you spend a lot of time outside the home, a mobile alert system could be your best choice.

## Health:

Consider your overall health. Is falling a concern? Do you take medications that influence your energy levels or balance? Do you have a condition that makes you susceptible to seizures? In as many as 30% of falls, seniors are not able to push their medical alert button. For people who are at risk for falling, a medical alert system with automatic fall detection can be invaluable, such as Lifeline's HomeSafe with AutoAlert. A well-designed automatic fall detection system can detect your fall and, if you aren't able to push your help button, place an alert call automatically to the system's response centre so that you can get the help you need quickly.

## Equipment:

To be able to access the provider's response centre 24/7, the customer needs to wear a pendant or wristband with their help button on it. That means the device must be lightweight and comfortable for daily wear. Pendants should come equipped with breakaway cords for safety. And finally, help button devices should have an attractive, subtle and discreet design.

With many medical alert systems, the device is paired with an in-home communicator unit that provides two-way communication with the response centre. The quality of the speaker and sensitivity of the microphone in the



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

## Customer service:

During an emergency, the quality of service the medical alert service's response associates provide is extremely important. Find out how much training they have. Do they understand the kinds of emergencies a senior might encounter? Do they know how to reassure an older person who might be in pain or shock? Do they have access to your medical information so that they can inform first responders about what they will be facing before they arrive? Are the response associates warm, caring and willing to take the time to give you the help you need? The answers to these questions will help you decide which medical alert system will best be able to help you in an emergency.

## Installation:

People who choose a medical alert system often have many questions about how to set up and use the equipment. Some companies simply send you the product and leave it to you to install it using instructions they provide. Sometimes they will offer telephone help. The best provide professional home installation, which eliminates a lot of worry and confusion. When trained personnel install the system for you, you have the reassurance that it has been set up and tested especially for your home and lifestyle. You will be assured that there is sufficient range between the wearable device and the communicator, and you will receive instruction about how to use the system.

**Related:** [How To Choose the Right Medical Alert System For Seniors](#)



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

The ability of the response centre to respond to your needs is essential. Check that the medical alert system's response centre can communicate with you in your preferred language. Also, to avoid having to share your personal and medical information across borders, verify that the response centres are located in Canada. Ask if the response centre only deals with medical alert system calls or if they are also dispatchers for other alarm services. You want the confidence of knowing that the response associates are focused on your emergency medical needs.

### Fall Detection:

A device equipped with fall detection technology can identify when the wearer has fallen and alert the response centre even if the wearer is unable to do so. For example, Lifeline's AutoAlert uses technology and algorithms to accurately and separately identify your regular movements, such as sitting or reclining, from a fall. This capability results in significantly fewer false alerts. Also, check to see how long the fall detection system allows before sending an alert signal so that, if you are able to move safely, your alert can be cancelled. For example, AutoAlert gives you 30 seconds before the Lifeline Response Centre is alerted and initiates contact with you. Some other medical alert systems only allow 10 seconds.

### Location Detection:

If you are using a medical alert system's mobile service so that you can be protected even while outside your home, you could be anywhere when a medical emergency arises. When this happens, it will be essential that you can be located quickly. With a mobile system, the wearable device is



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

buildings are blocking the signal from the satellite. Look for a system that uses more than GPS. For example, Lifeline's GoSafe system uses up to six locating technologies, including GPS, to identify where you are, even if you cannot speak. (GoSafe is also equipped with AutoAlert fall detection.)

Related: [Important Message about Lifeline neck cords](#)

## Battery Backup and Maintenance:

Your equipment needs to be able to work even when the power goes out. Check that the in-home communicator has a built-in, battery backup system. If you have a mobile system with a wearable device that must be recharged periodically, find out whether it can be charged while you're wearing it. If not and the device needs to be removed and put into a charging cradle to recharge, you will be left unprotected while recharging occurs. Also, find out how long a charge will last; some medical alert systems' charges last longer than others. And find out how often you need to test your system to ensure it is working properly or if this is done automatically by the medical alert provider. Maintaining the system should be as worry-free as possible. Finally, ask if service calls such as battery replacements are included with the service or if you are expected to pay separately for this service and/or look after having the work done yourself.

## 3. Fees for Medical Alert Services

### What Is Included:

The fees for a medical alert system should be upfront and clear. There



Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

So make certain you will not be charged any fees when you use the system, including accidentally pressing your button.

## Contracts:

It's important to understand if you are committing to use the service for a set period of time. Is the fee tied to signing a contract, or to an existing contract with the company, e.g. a cellular telephone or cable service, and will the fee increase once that contract expires? Also, ask if the service is transferable in case you move residences.

## Cancellation:

There may be a time when you need or want to cancel the service. Ask if there is a cancellation fee for your medical alert system and find out how much advance warning you need to give to cancel.

# The Last Word

Medical alert systems provide safety and independence to older adults who are vulnerable to medical emergencies, and peace of mind to their family members and friends. However, there are many providers in the Canadian market and they are all different in some way. It's important to make sure you choose the right one for your needs.



All of the providers reviewed in this article are worthy of your consideration

Have questions or want to  
speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email

customer care; and the value they provide make them a solid recommendation.

*“To the amazing Lifeline team, Thank you so very much for your kind attention to my dad, Jean Paul Hebert. We have had your service for many years now, since mom became ill. We thank you most sincerely.”*



**Denise**  
Caregiver

*“The wireless service is perfect for someone like me who has a chronic illness. It lets me stay independent safely and it’s so wonderful not to have to worry about how I would get help if I have another unnoticed seizure.”*



**Nigel F.**  
Subscriber

*“Words can barely express how much peace of mind this service has brought to me and my family since getting it. It has allowed me to live alone, in my own home, ever since my husband’s death years ago. A wonderful service.”*



**Thelma**  
Subscriber



Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

1-866-784-1992

Email



# Get the latest from Lifeline Canada

Subscribe to receive new expert resources and tools for senior safety, exclusive offers, product updates and more.

Name

Email

I agree to be emailed

Subscribe

## Products

On the Go

At Home

Fall Detection

Medication Dispenser

Check In Calls

Compare Solutions

## Resources

Tools & Tips for Seniors Safety

Blog

Fall Prevention Guide

Caregiver Guide

Medical Alert Assessment

Best Medical Alert Svstems

## About

About Lifeline

Customer Stories

Reviews

AutoAlert Fall Detection Technology

Employment

## Support

Technical Support

Important Message about Lifeline neck cords

FAQs



Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

1-866-784-1992

Email

105 – 95 Barber Greene Road, Toronto, ON M3C 3E9  
774, boul. Décarie, bureau 100, Saint-Laurent (Québec) H4L 3L5

© 2023 Lifeline of Canada Holdings Ltd. All rights reserved.



### Disclaimers

† Use promo code: 1421. Offer available at locally participating programs and valid for new activations only. Not to be combined with any other offer. Some restrictions apply. Discounts are not applicable on all service options, for out of area installations and/or shipping fees.



Have questions or want to speak to a representative?

 1-866-784-1992

 Email