

It's About Time – Getting Help Fast

Description

There are some grim statistics regarding those who have experienced a fall and do not receive timely help. According to the *New England Journal of Medicine*:

- 18 hours is the average time people have spent unable to call for help
- Only 11% of victims were found by family members
- 28% of those who experience a fall often die due to lack of response
- 62% of survivors of falls required a hospital stay, discharge to a rehabilitation facility, extended physical therapy, and a struggle, not always successful, to regain the ability to walk again, not to mention stress to family members and possibly substantive medical expenses out of pocket.
- Worse, only 38% of those who have survived falls ever return to independent living. Again, this is often due to delays in receiving help.

Falls are the most serious risk to an aging population. Fall-related hip fractures account for approximately 25 percent of injury deaths among those over age 65, and 34 percent of injury deaths among those aged 85 or older (Peek-Asa & Zwerling, 2003). Furthermore, 1.8 million older Americans were treated in emergency rooms and 433,000 were hospitalized for falls. Cost of falls among the elderly will reach \$43 billion by 2020. Inability to receive help for a medical emergency may be common, but the inability to receive a quick response for a need — like an emergency fall — represents the end of living independently. It doesn't need to be that way. Utilizing technology in an intelligent way can prevent loss of independent living. ***It's about time!***

Category

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