

Help I've Fallen And...

Description

Warning! This blog post is presented with the greatest respect to caregivers and families. We need to talk about the button which is used to summon help through a PERS (Personal Emergency Response System) or medical alarm device.

I am sure that you know the rest of that catchphrase. But the actual scenario sometimes is “HELP! I've fallen and I can't push the button!” Caregivers need to address that very important, but perhaps not so obvious, aspect of these 'emergency medical alarm' devices. The button is an ingenious invention that is, unfortunately, barely a 25% solution. The fact is, 50% of people who own these devices do not wear the pendant. Of those who wear them, only 50% actually use them. Why? When a fall occurs, it incapacitates a person in some way. They may be in shock or they may be unconscious, or they may not be wearing the device at all!

Those who are in shock are not thinking about the pendent, only about survival. And if a person is on the floor unconscious, there is simply no way for them to seek help. The New England Journal of Medicine reports that the average time spent incapacitated when a fall occurs in the home is approximately 18 hours. That's the average. But it is far worse than that because 62% of people who don't obtain timely help (within a hour) after an incapacitating fall are unable to return to independent living. There are many even more unpleasant statistics about falls, but I will stop here. What I want you to realize is that in some ways, a panic pendant can be hazardous to your a senior's health! Strong words, I know.

So, what is the alternative? In-home care ,24/7, can help prevent catastrophic falls. But at \$20 per hour, that gets quite expensive. Assisted Living Facilities can provide a watchful eye for a high price tag (more than \$2,000/mo on average nationwide). But even ALFs aren't guaranteed to provide the help needed when falls occur in the residents' room. A solution that can strike a balance between expensive care and effective safety is what we call **iPERS** — Intelligent Personal Emergency Response Solution. **iPERS** will monitor both the individual and the environment to virtually eliminate the frightening prospect of someone falling in their home and not being able to receive help. Motion sensing, fall detection devices, and a sophisticated notification technology makes this type of medical monitoring more effective because there is no need for a button to create an alert.

And beyond the risk of falls, **iPERS** can not only sense motion, but it can also sense the lack of motion or activity. This web based interface makes it easy to create rules about normal daily activities to determine what has changed and may not be normal. Of course, not every situation is an emergency. So with **iPERS**, you can specify the right first responder, even multiple responders. **iPERS** also provides the appropriate connection to a 24/7 response center. Notifications do not need to be retrieved – instead, they are sent via email, text message, or telephone and can be directed to as many people as needed immediately and reliably.

It's time to see traditional PERS for what it was – a great idea which has had its day. As our senior

population grows, we need the latest tools to help keep our loved ones where they want to be – in their homes. **iPERS** has effectively created the first intelligent and passive monitoring system at an affordable price. Allowing our seniors age in place (their own place!) provides both seniors and family members who care about them a higher degree of confidence, satisfaction, independence, and wealth preservation.

Jay Wasack, President

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1. Connected Caregiving
2. Intelligent Monitoring
3. iPERS
4. PERS

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