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EPILEPSY ALARMS AND TELECARE SERVICES

Epilepsy alarms can give peace of mind and can be essential for personal safety and promoting independence. There can be considerable costs attached to buying an alarm so it is best to look at the range of products available to find what suits your needs best.

The seizure type: is it a tonic clonic seizure, another seizure with movement, does the person get a warning or not, does the seizure feature saliva, urine, breathing changes or wandering.

Who needs an alarm: anyone with epilepsy can benefit but especially those who live alone or parent alone, people with sleep seizures, uncontrolled tonic clonic seizures, prolonged seizures, those with history of injuries, people who wish to live independently of family.

Which alarm is best suited: not all alarms are the same they capture different seizure types in different situations. A bed alarm can detect seizures in bed but a separate alarm is needed to detect waking/daytime seizures.

Consider the following:-

1. The seizure features the alarm needs to detect.
2. Will the alarm work if the person gets no warning?
3. Where it's needed, when it's needed e.g. at home/out and about/bed.
4. Is the alarm is to be worn or portable or is it to be in a fixed place?
5. How many metres is the range of detection for a fixed alarm?
6. Will the alarm need to have GPS to locate a person outside of home?
7. Does the alarm need to autodial for help?
8. Is a monitoring service required?
9. Is there a mobile phone app to support the alarm?

If in doubt discuss your needs with your nurse or the alarm technician who can advise what best suits your needs.

What kind of support does the person need? Someone living alone may need an alarm which detects the seizure and contacts a monitoring centre/ keyholder. If they live with family they may just want to have the alarm alert a carer in their home.

Alarm features

Fall detectors: detect seizures with falls in people who get no warning and can dial out to get help.

Bed alarms: There are two main types. The first is a mattress sensor which detects seizures with movement, urine or saliva. It can alert a carer in the home or dial out using an auto-dialler. The second

is a sleep monitor, a camera/motion sensor which works with Apple devices only and detects a wide range of seizures, records them and alerts a carer.

- Chair/bed occupancy alarms: Detect a person vacating a chair/bed
- Door sensors: detect when someone leaves a room or the house
- Wandering alarms: wearable alarms which give GPS location
- Auto-diallers: can dial preset numbers or dial a monitoring centre
- Pendant alarms: can only be used if the person gets a reliable warning
- Smartwatches: wearable, detect tonic clonic/seizures with movement
- Monitoring : 24 hr call centre, alerts keyholders/ emergency services
- Camera based alarms: use motion sensors to detect seizures

Mobile/device compatibility: The 2 main smartwatches work with android phones. SAMI sleep monitor works only with Apple devices.

Funding: Costs vary from €100-€1200 depending on alarm types and packages. Some companies will offer payment plans or rental options. HSE funding is hard to obtain and is assessed on a case by case basis and medical evidence is required.

Alarm suppliers and telecare monitoring services:

Emergency Response

Ryland Road
Bunclody
Enniscorthy
Co Wexford
Telephone: 1850 232324
Website: www.emergencyresponse.ie

Fold Telecare

Unit 6
Clones Business Technology Park
Clones
Co Monaghan
Telephone: 047 52375
Website: www.foldireland.ie

Home Care Technologies

Classis Business Centre
Classis
Ovens
Co. Cork.
Tel : 1890 480 480
Web : www.homecaretechnologies.ie

Independent Healthcare Services

Unit 3 Westpoint Business Park
Mulhuddart
Dublin 15
Telephone: 01 443 3390
Website: www.ihsLtd.ie

Smart Telecare

Unit 4A
Fota Point Business Park
Carrigtwohill,
Co. Cork
Telephone : 021 602 4255
Web : www.smart-telecare.com

Sami alert sleep seizure monitor for apple devices: <http://www.samialert.com/>