

## **Managing Medication/Obtaining Emergency Assistance**

Assistive technology related to managing medications and obtaining emergency assistance applies to such areas as: organizing and scheduling medications, communicating with your doctor, and calling out for help. Some important devices can be as simple as a pill organizer that dispenses the proper medication, or as complex as an alarm system that alerts either fire or emergency medical teams of your condition. Here are a few of the devices that can assist you:

**Pill Organizers:** For those who take medication on a daily basis, pill organizers can help to keep track of dosages. These organizers are also made in enlarged print and Braille, as well as with alarms that will tell you when it is time for your medication. To assist those who have difficulty using their hands, all organizers come with either easy-opening lids or push buttons.

**Medical Equipment:** To assist those with difficulty seeing, many scales and medical equipment now come in enlarged print. Some devices also have talk functions that announce things like your weight or blood pressure. For diabetics, a wide range of special equipment, such as automatic injectors and magnifiers for syringes, is available.

**Smoke Detectors:** Smoke detectors have been adapted to warn individuals who are hard of hearing as well as those with low vision. For those who are hard of hearing, intense strobe lights will go off to alert the people in the house. If they are sleeping, a vibrating apparatus can be placed under a mattress or pillow to wake them in the event of an emergency.

**Personal Pagers:** These pagers are used to reach individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. The pagers work within a range of 100 feet. These pagers react to a baby's cry, doorbells, and audio alarms by automatically sending a vibrating signal to the pager unit.

**Emergency Alert Device:** When wearing this device you can call for emergency assistance from wherever you are. In some models you may press a designated button to alert emergency medical teams, or you can even talk to someone directly through your unit.

Things you can do to keep yourself safe:

- Keep all medication in order and in a designated place. Make sure that at least one member of your family knows your medication schedule and the proper dosages. It may help to have a calendar on your refrigerator that lists your dosage and times, refill dates, and your doctor appointments.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist for a detailed description of your medication. Some medicines do not work well with certain over-the-

counter drugs. The foods you eat could also change the effects of the medication.

- Check to make sure that all of your appliances are turned off, and that all your windows and doors are locked before you go to sleep. Make it a nightly routine so that you don't forget.
- If your phone has a speed dial option, make sure that 911 and your doctor's phone number are programmed in.
- In the event of a fire, it's always safe to plan an escape route AND to practice this route at least once a month.
- Pharmacists can supply non-child-proof containers to make opening easier.