

Widow alone can get medical-alert device

Dear Jo:

I have lived alone since the death of my husband four years ago. I enjoy my independence and hope to keep my present living arrangements for years to come. I worry about becoming ill and being unable to call for help.

Do you know anything about medical-alert devices that call for help in an emergency?

Mrs. S.W.
Toronto Reader

Dear Mrs. W:

The most popular medical-alert device is the one that is operated through local hospitals. A home transmitter usually in the form of a bracelet or pendant is worn by the person who has purchased the service.

A button on the transmitter when pushed alerts the hospital; the hospital operator then calls for help. A major disadvantage of this system is the lack of voice communication, and valuable time is lost determining what type of emergency has occurred.

Some newer systems are now offering voice communication with the victim who can be as far away as 50 feet from the telephone.

The cost of these devices ranges from \$90 to \$1,000 with monthly service charges of \$10 to \$20. Some companies offer a leasing arrangement.

gerontology

A. Jolayne Farrell

TO FIND OUT if this service is offered in your community, check with your local senior citizens' centre, fire department or hospital.

Before purchasing this service proceed with caution. Check the size of the device; it may be so large that it will be too cumbersome to wear or it may be so small that it will get lost.

Ensure that the company that is offering this service has a reliable record including quick repair or replacement of the equipment. Transmitters should have a range of at least 50 feet, and their operation

should not be hindered by furniture or walls.

I have a great deal of admiration for older people who continue to live on their own in the community particularly after widowhood when it isn't easy. Medical-alert devices and other safety equipment on the market are very helpful in maintaining this independence. Good luck!

Dear Jo:

I would like to take a class in anthropology this fall at our local community college but feel that perhaps I'm a little too old. I'm over 65 and then some!

None of my friends is interested in taking a course, so I'm getting "cold feet" and may withdraw my application. I'd appreciate your comments on my situation.

Mrs. S.

Dear Mrs. S:

The enrollment of older students

In community colleges and universities is increasing with the decline in number of 18-year-olds as the population ages. You shouldn't be concerned if none of your friends have enrolled. You'll meet many new friends of all ages

when you go back to school.

Readers can write to Jolayne Farrell at P.O. Box 66, Postal Station G, 1075 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario M4M 3E8, Canada.



Terry Gibb

Birds like seeds, corn, milo best

I bought a bird feeder at your annual garage sale and wanted to know what type of feed is best for winter birds?

A. The following information comes from the non-game wildlife program of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Brant International Inc.

Feeding birds in winter is most successful when you know the specific needs of the different winter birds. By using a variety of feeds and feeders, you can attract many different types of birds to your yard.

Locate feeders in a sheltered area or near trees, bushes or buildings.

IN GENERAL, the best grains for bird feeding are sunflower seeds, corn, milo and millet. These feeds will attract certain species of birds:

- Small, black, oil type sunflower seeds; white proso millet — goldfinches, blue jays, cardinals, black-capped chickadees, evening grosbeaks, pine siskins, purple finches, white-breasted nuthatches.
- Ear, shelled or cracked corn — blue jays, house sparrows, starlings, pheasants.

- Milo — house sparrows, pine siskins, tree sparrows.

- Millet — house sparrows, dark-eyed juncos, tree sparrows.

- Oats — house sparrows.

- Squash seeds — cardinals.

- Wheat — house sparrows, pine siskins, redpolls, dark-eyed juncos, starlings, tree sparrows.

- Suet feeders (available at supermarket meat counters) — brown creepers, downy, hairy, and red-bellied woodpeckers; red-breasted and white-breasted nuthatches; black-capped chickadees.

- Bacon drippings — woodpeckers, nuthatches, chickadees.

- Peanut butter — woodpeckers, chickadees, juncos, nuthatches, cardinals, brown creepers.

- Thistle seed (for native songbird feeding) — redpolls, purple finches, pine siskins, goldfinches.

THE BEST way to discourage house sparrows and starlings is by offering sunflower seeds exclusively.

Sand or grit is necessary for birds to help grind up the eaten seeds. It can be mixed into the food or provided at another location.

Another way to attract birds to your yard is by maintaining an open, heated water birdbath.

Ideally, you should start your feeders in late September and continue feeding through mid-April. Once you've started, do not discontinue feeding until spring as the birds will return to the feeding location expecting a food supply.

The Consumer Mailbag answers your questions. Address mail to The Consumer Mailbag, Concern Detroit, 1025 Shelby, Detroit 48226.

Bar seminar on child cases

A videotaped training seminar for attorneys interested in obtaining appointments for Juvenile Court as guardian ad litem in child abuse and neglect cases will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Dec. 1, in the Oakland County Board of Commissioners Auditorium, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac.

Presentation will cover basic procedures in abuse and neglect cases, overview of the resources available through the county and background on psychological factors of child abuse.

Registration for the seminar will be held in the Oakland County Bar Association offices on the fifth floor of the courthouse tower beginning at 8:30 a.m. that morning.

Fees are \$25 for OCB members (\$35 for those who have not pre-registered) and \$30 for non-members (\$40 for those who have not pre-registered).

The program is sponsored by the Bar's Juvenile Court Committee.

EYE CARE

Gordon R.A. Fishman, MD
Diplomat of the American Board of Ophthalmology

MACULAR DEGENERATION

The macula is a special area in the retina. Except for cataract, it is the most common cause of poor vision after age 65. Located in the back of the eye, it is responsible for receiving the image from the light rays as they enter the eye. The retina in turn sends this image to the brain via the optic nerve. The macula is the point on which most of the images we see are focused. Aging, hardening of the arteries and possibly light damage are three most common causes of disease in this part of the retina. Heredity may also play an important part in macular degeneration.

Patients with macular degeneration never become blind. Macular degeneration is peculiar in that it blots out central vision but does not affect peripheral or side vision. The macula is examined by injecting a fluorescent dye into an arm vein. When the dye reaches

the retinal blood vessels, they outline the extent of the damage in the retina. Some forms of macular disease can be treated with the use of special lasers. These lasers are called Krypton lasers. Their wave length is ideal for treating tissue in the macula. Many forms of macular disease cannot be treated today. However, research into macular degeneration may prove fruitful in the very near future. In the meantime, be sure to obtain an annual eye examination to insure you are not developing macular disease, especially if your parents or relatives have it.

For your FREE copy of Dr. Fishman's brochure "EYE CARE" write to him at 1777 Axtell Rd., Troy, MI 48064 or 23700 Orchard Lake Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48024

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