



MedicAlert<sup>®</sup> *Safely Home*<sup>®</sup>

THE  
THOMAS SILL  
FOUNDATION  
INC

Thank you to the Thomas Sill Foundation for its commitment to community education for care providers in Manitoba.

**Alzheimer Society**  
MANITOBA  
*Dementia Care & Brain Health*



# MedicAlert<sup>®</sup> *Safely Home*<sup>®</sup>

- The MedicAlert Safely Home (MASH) program is a partnership between the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation and the Alzheimer Society of Canada.
- The Canadian MedicAlert Foundation is linked to a 24-hour emergency hotline accessible around the world and available in over 140 languages.

# Lost... Confused... No Way Home...

- When someone has dementia they may lose the ability to recognize familiar places, to communicate or to remember their own name or address. They may leave home, become confused and get lost.

# MedicAlert® Safely Home® is the way back.

MedicAlert Safely Home is:

- a national program
- designed to help identify those who are lost and assist in a safe return home
- identifiable with engraved identification; can have other medical information engraved
- designed for police and EMS to identify the person who wandered and to bring the family back together

# Symptoms: Getting Lost

- ⌚ Disorientation to time and place
- ⌚ Decreased judgment
- ⌚ Lack of sense of lapsed time
- ⌚ Difficulties communicating

# Defining Wandering Behaviour..

- ⌚ “movement by a person with dementia, whether aimless or purposeful, on foot or by other means, which occurs when certain cognitive losses and environmental circumstances intersect, causing that person to become lost in an unsupervised and potentially unsafe setting”

Silverstein, Flaherty and Tobin (2002)

# Types of Wandering

- ⌚ Passive wandering
- ⌚ Purposeful wandering
- ⌚ Night-time wandering
- ⌚ Industrious wandering

# Why Might People with Dementia Wander?

- ⌚ Changed Environment
- ⌚ Excess Energy
- ⌚ Searching for the Past
- ⌚ Expressing Boredom
- ⌚ Continuing a Habit
- ⌚ Looking for something specific: washroom



# MedicAlert<sup>®</sup> Safely Home<sup>®</sup>

- ⌚ Is only \$5.00 per month plus a one-time registration fee of \$24.00
- ⌚ Offers more than 100 medical ID's starting at only \$39.00
- ⌚ Offers MedicAlert Safely Home members a complete medical record linked to a 24-hour emergency hotline accessible by first responders in less than 5 seconds.

# Register Early



Register people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias with MedicAlert Safely Home® before they become lost.

Wandering bracelets take 4-6 weeks to arrive from the time that your registration and payment are received.

# How to Register

- ⌚ Call **MedicAlert Safely Home®** at **1-855-581-3794**
  - ⌚ To sign up for MedicAlert Safely Home
  - ⌚ To update your existing record
  - ⌚ For more information
- ⌚ Registration forms are available from the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba or can be downloaded at [www.medicalert.ca/safelyhome](http://www.medicalert.ca/safelyhome)
- ⌚ Cheques payable to: **Canadian MedicAlert Foundation**

# ***Home Safety***

## ***For Families Experiencing Dementia***

### **Living Safely Offers:**

- Piece of Mind for Family Care Providers:
- Provide Opportunities for Independence
- Provide Supportive Caring Home Environment



# Changes in a Person with Dementia that can affect Safety

- Judgment
- Sense of Time and Place
- Behaviour
- Physical Ability
- Acuity of the Senses

# Safety Principles for Home

- Limit access to potentially dangerous places and situations.
- This includes:
  - Secure the home so the person can not exit unsafely.
  - Place household chemicals and medications in locked cupboards.
  - Replace interior locking door handles with locking hand sets.

# Safety Principles for Home

- Be aware of dangerous objects and substances.
- Examples:
  - Beware of items that could be mistaken.
  - Supervise smoking and limit use of alcohol.
  - Simplify living spaces by removing clutter.

# Safety Principles for Home

- Avoid Injury during Daily Activities
  - Adjust water heater temperature to 120 degrees
  - Mark the edge of stair treads
  - Supervise the use of medications





# In Case of Emergency

- An ***Emergency*** is a sudden, urgent, usually unexpected occurrence or occasion requiring immediate action.
- This could include:
  - Environmental Conditions: Storms/Fire/Power Outages
  - Hospital or Respite Stays

# Emergency Considerations

- Extra attention must be made to ensure the health and safety of the people with dementia since the change of location and unfamiliar noises and activities may cause them increased stress and confusion.



# Make a Plan

- Remember the specialized needs of people with dementia and other medical conditions.
- Include up to date medical and contact information.
- Designate contact persons and ensure they know your plan and have a copy.
- Review it once a year.

# Prepare a Kit

- To prepare for an emergency that could last 72 hours, what would you put in the kit?

# Personalize a Grab Bag for Hospital & Respite Stays

- Remember the environment is unfamiliar and favourite items from home can help calm a person with dementia.
- Include:
  - Eyeglasses, hearing aides and batteries, family photo's, personal music selections with music player, hand cream, blanket or afghan, incontinence products & wipes, medications, medical & legal documents.

# Additional Considerations

- Is the Person with Dementia registered with MedicAlert Safely Home<sup>®</sup>?
- Consider the benefits of monitoring devices?
- Is an E.R.I.K. Kit prepared and current?
- Does the E.R.I.K. Kit note if the spouse is unable to be left alone due to dementia?

# Tools to Help

- At Home with Alzheimer's Disease: Useful Adaptations to the Home Environment:  
[www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/pdf/60849e.pdf?fr=1298435598462](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/pdf/60849e.pdf?fr=1298435598462)
- Creating a Safe Home for People with Dementia: Alzheimer Society of Manitoba
- E.R.I.K Kits: Any Winnipeg Seniors Resource Council

