

Around the house

ALERTING DEVICES: *Having a hearing loss can mean missing important sounds around the house. The range of Alerting Devices available is sure to assist individuals needs.*

BABY ALERT MONITORS



FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS



TELEPHONE ALERTING SYSTEM



ALARM CLOCKS



PAGER SYSTEMS



DOOR BELLS



WEATHER ALERT



Adapted from
Connevans Limited
"Deaf Equipment
Explained"

Around the house

Baby Monitors

When a person with a hearing loss becomes a parent, they may worry about how they will know when their baby is crying, especially at night when they are sleeping. There are quite a few baby monitoring systems available for people who have a hard time hearing, even for those that have no hearing at all.



Determining the best device for you:

Baby Cry Monitors alert adults in another room when Baby needs attention. Devices for people with hearing loss incorporate a flashing light system or a vibrating alert. Determining the best device for you depends on a number of factors:



❖ **Existing system:** If the family already has an alert system installed in the home (such as the Silent Call, Sonic Alert or Alertmaster systems) a cry monitor is available that will be compatible with the existing system.

❖ **Portability:** An alerting device connected to a large table lamp may not be effective when you are moving around the house or garden. Either multiple receivers will need to be stationed around the house or pager-like vibrators can be worn close to the body to alert the parent anywhere within range of the signal. Be sure the range is long enough. If the unit uses the Internet, then range is not a problem, but if not, you need to check its maximum range (i.e. 1,000 or 2,000 ft).



❖ **Sensitivity:** Some systems allow for sensitivity adjustment. If your baby tends to sigh and coo while sleeping, the monitor with this feature can be adjusted to ignore those quieter sounds. On the other hand, if you want to be alerted to whispers and quiet whimpers, the device can be set for higher sensitivity.

❖ **Channels and Frequency:** Families living in apartment buildings may experience interference from other monitors in the area. In general, a higher frequency model (900 Mhz & 2.4Ghz) will have less interference and will work over a larger distance. Channels may help to eliminate interference from other wireless devices in the home (TV channel changers, cordless telephones, etc.)

Taken from E-Michigan Deaf and Hard of Hearing People
http://www.michdhh.org/assistive_devices/baby_cry_monitor.html

Around the house

Fire alarms/Carbon Monoxide Detectors

You may already have a fire alarm system at home which will work well for most people with amplification (hearing aids, cochlear implant or bone anchored hearing devices) during the day. At night, however, they are vulnerable when they are not wearing their listening devices. No person should rely on others to wake them, so it is important you install a system which will alert a person with a hearing loss to the fire/carbon monoxide detectors.



FEEL THE VIBRATIONS...SEE THE LIGHTS: Smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light are available for people with a hearing loss. When people with a hearing loss are asleep, a high intensity strobe light may be required along with a pillow or bed shaker to wake them up and alert them to fire conditions so they can escape. **Another Thought:** Smoke alarms with a strobe light outside the home to catch the attention of neighbors, and emergency call systems for summoning help are also available.

- ❖ Install smoke alarms inside and outside each bedroom and sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- ❖ Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- ❖ It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds they all sound.
- ❖ **Test all smoke alarms at least once a month.** Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working. **Change batteries** in smoke alarm at least once a year.
- ❖ **Replace all smoke alarms** when they are ten (10) years old.
- ❖ A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet from the stove.



CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR:

Every fuel-burning appliance in your home, including a gas furnace, produces some levels of carbon monoxide. Normally those gasses are carried out of your home, but if something goes wrong, a carbon monoxide leak can be life-threatening to your family. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless and odorless gas that is not detectable by humans.

It is important to have a **Carbon Monoxide (CO) detector**

1. On every floor
2. Five feet from the ground
3. Near every sleeping area

Also follow the directions that comes with the carbon monoxide detector.

Around the house

Alarm Clocks

The problem is that people with hearing loss take their amplification (hearing aid, cochlear implant or bone anchored hearing devices) out overnight, meaning they can't hear an alarm. Also the pitch of an alarm clock's "beep" is often very high and not adjustable which is a problem for people with high frequency hearing loss.



There are alarm clocks with special features to wake someone who is deaf or hard of hearing. They can with any combination of the following features:

A. **LOUD SOUND:** Alarm clocks can have adjustable volume and many also allow to adjust the tone of the sound so you can tailor the alarm sound to individual hearing loss.



B. **VIBRATION:** The most popular choice is often using the bed shaker or vibrating pad. You place the "shaker" under the pillow or mattress and it will vibrate when the alarm goes off. This can be hard wired or wireless. It has also been provided through a wide variety of devices that shakes/vibrates such as a pillow, a blanket, the clock itself or a wrist watch/band.

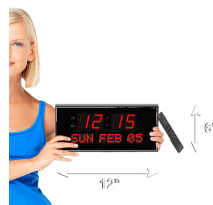


C. **FLASHING LIGHT:** A more subtle way of being woken up is a strobe light which will flash to alert you when the alarm goes off. This can be a built in strobe or a system where your lamp is plugged into it.



OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- ❖ Do you want a digital display or prefer an analogue display with hands?
- ❖ Do you want your clock to alert you of other sounds such as the telephone, doorbell, fire alarm, etc.?
- ❖ Do you want to utilize your smart phone?
- ❖ Other disabilities such as vision loss, dexterity issues, seizures, etc.



Around the house

Weather Alert

More specific information about weather, go to <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/dhh-safety>

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) All-Hazards Radio receives National Weather Service (NWS) warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day.



Specialized Weather Radios

While primarily an auditory alert system, many off-the-shelf All-Hazards Radios are available with visual and vibrating alarm features and simple text readouts for use by deaf or hard of hearing individuals. Special adaptors can also be added to some models of All-Hazards Radios by certain vendors.

These adaptors can include, colorized warning lights to indicate the level of alert (Statement, Watch, Warning) and a Liquid Crystal Display readout of specific warnings. All Hazards Radios are programmable state/country selections that screen out alerts from other areas and can be battery-operated and portable at home, work, school, or while travelling around the country.

Other ways to receive weather information:

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)

WEA are sent only during an emergency. They are sent by authorized government alerting authorities through your mobile carrier. Many wireless devices available since 2012 support the ability to receive and present a Wireless Emergency Alert. Currently there are three different versions of WEA. The higher the number, the more detailed services you are able to get.



Teletypewriters (TTYS) and Video Relay System (VRS)

- Some private companies & government agencies provide emergency alerts through e-mail systems and text messaging.
- Some communities have a system for the police department or other emergency notification agency to make emergency voice and TTY calls to inform people in a designated area.

To see if your local government offers this type of emergency notification, contact your area NON-EMERGENCY police number.



Laptops and Desktop Computers

There are a variety of resources to link to on your computers to get the latest severe warnings and/or current weather. There is a list of commercial alerting resources for various delivery options such as email, text, phone call, computer software, app, desktop, or radio. Go to www.weather.gov/enterprise/ to find a list of possible places to link to for the information that you want.



Around the house

Doorbells: *A frustrating occurrence that can be encountered by people with a hearing loss is not hearing the doorbell. It can be inconvenient missing parcel deliveries and disappointing missing visits from friends.*

There are a variety of products available for people to use in the place of traditional doorbells. These products use light, vibration and/or loud sounds in helping to alert a person with a hearing loss that someone is at the door.

Light Doorbells



Light doorbells, or visual alerting devices, use light to alert a person that someone is at the door. These doorbells range from a single light connected to the doorbell to a more elaborate system that flashes all the lights in the house. These doorbells are either activated by a doorbell button or a door knock alert system.



Radio Doorbells



For someone who cannot hear a regular doorbell, a radio doorbell might be the answer. Radio doorbells send out signals that trigger speakers throughout the house or apartment. These speakers then make a loud noise to alert the person that someone is at the door. Like light doorbells and door knock alert systems radio doorbells are generally wireless devices. They are also probably the most affordable option of deaf-oriented doorbell.



Modified Traditional Doorbell

If you'd prefer not to purchase a completely new doorbell system, there are companies that make devices that will work with existing doorbells. Many of these require rewiring. When dealing with installing a new doorbell system or altering an existing one, it's always a good idea to contact a certified electrician to help with the project. On top of being a safe option, electricians can often offer expert advice that will make the process simpler, faster and potentially less damaging to the infrastructure.

Around the house

Pagers

Each company that designs assistive devices for deaf and hard of hearing typically has a personal pager as part of their system. An individual with a hearing loss can wear the pager to alert to a variety of triggers such as doorbell, fire alarm, baby crying, etc. That is the receiver. It typically alerts the person through vibration and often comes with an indicator light or message. There would also have to be transmitters or something to send a signal to alert the person what is happening.



A simpler pager may get a person's attention with a short message or instructions sent from a "base".

The range of the signal should be noted to see if it is suitable for the individual's situation(s).

Telephone/Videophone/Cell Phones Alerting Systems



There are telephone ring indicators that let a person with a hearing loss know there is a telephone call. A ring indicator has a louder ring than a telephone and usually a choice of sounds. Some flash and some have a vibrating pad option to wake you at night.

The most reliable type of indicator plugs directly into any phone socket as the telephone. It's best to have it where you spend most of your time even if that is not where the telephone is.

Wireless versions are also available, which are great if you don't have a telephone socket nearby. Some indicators use an attached "microphone" for sound pick up instead. These "here" when the phone is ringing.



As cell phones are now the popular route for calling, there are also alerting systems for them. These flashing/vibrating cell phone signalers and loud ringers alert deaf and hard of hearing to incoming calls or texts by flashing a bright light, vibrating or loud sound. Some will even alert you to apps, emails and social messages. You can also set your cell phone to vibrate or flash when it receives a signal.

Where to get more information



The North Dakota School for the Deaf/Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is the North Dakota's leading experts on hearing loss. For more information on assistive technology, contact one of the student age outreach specialist in your area for children age 0 to 21. For individuals after graduation or age 21, contact the adult service outreach department. Go to <https://www.nd.gov/ndsd/outreach-services> for contact information.



At **North Dakota Assistive**, they have assistive technology (AT) devices that can be demonstrated or be borrowed for short term to see if it is the right fit. They also have a variety of programs to assist in the purchasing of these devices such as the reuse program, low interest loans, and grants.

Whether an individual needs a device that makes sounds louder or converts sound to a visual or tactile message, they will work to find the equipment that does what is needed. This equipment might include:

- Personal amplification devices for home, work, or leisure
- Visual and tactile alerting devices that turn sounds into light signals or vibrations to alert for alarms, doorbells, and phones
- Telephones that amplify incoming voices or convert incoming speech to written text (Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Services)

WHERE TO FIND EQUIPMENT:

Assistive Living Devices (ALDs) can be purchased through companies such as Harris Communications, Maxi-Aids, or Hear More. They all have free catalogues that they are happy to send you or you can visit their websites.

Harris Communications

15155 Technology Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

Voice: 800-825-6758

TTY: 800-825-9187

VP: 952-388-2152

Website:

www.harriscomm.com/

Maxi-Aids, Inc.

42 Executive Blvd.,
Farmingdale, NY 11735

Voice: 800-522-6294

TTY: 800-281-3555

Website:

www.maxiaids.com

Hear-More

42 Executive Blvd.
Farmingdale, NY 11735

Voice: 800-881-4327

TTY: 800-281-3555

VP: 631-752-1145

Website:

www.hearmore.com