



Pull String vs. Pressure Pad Patient Monitors

Is One Better than Another?

Don't let at-risk-for-fall patients be the victims of bad fall prevention management. Knowing some Fall Monitor basics can greatly minimize risk.

Mobility monitors are typically available in two configurations: Pressure Pad or Pull String. Let's look at the advantages and disadvantages of both systems.

Pressure Pad and Monitor

How it Works: A thin pad is placed under the patient in their bed or chair. When the patient attempts to stand up the monitor sets off an alarm, triggered when their weight is removed from the pressure pad.

Advantages: The pressure pad can be moved to the precise location so that the resident has maximum freedom to move around in their chair or bed. For example, by placing the pad under the patient's buttocks in bed the patient can sit up and lean

forward without triggering the alarm. Pressure pads allow the resident more freedom of movement when they roll in their sleep. Also, it is difficult for the resident to defeat this system because the patient is sitting on the switch.

Disadvantages: Pads wear out quickly. In fact, many manufacturers recommend that their pads be replaced every 30 to 60 days. Some pressure pad systems are not moisture proof and can be rendered useless should they come in contact with urine or spills. In addition, a Pressure Pad Monitor can only be set up when patients are out of their bed or chair.

Smart Caregiver Corporation recommends and provides an FDA approved moistureproof vinyl pad guaranteed for 1 year for most applications.

Pull String Monitor

How it Works: This monitor system typically uses a magnet tied to a light cord. The other end of the cord is clipped to the resident's garment. When the resident attempts to get out of their chair or bed, they pull on the cord, yanking the magnet from position and triggering the alarm.

Advantages: Unlike Pressure Pads, a resident can be in bed or in their chair at the time of monitor setup. Pull String Monitors are typically less expensive and usually

last longer than the Pressure Pads. Pull String Monitors can be used anywhere, anytime because they install easily and quickly.

Disadvantages The correct cord length adjustment between the resident and the monitor is critical to the proper operation of a Pull String Monitor. If the cord is adjusted too short, the resident can't move without triggering the alarm. If the cord is adjusted too loosely, the patient or surrounding equipment can become entangled. When used in bed, Pull String cords often induce false alarms when the patient rolls in their sleep. Also, a resident can easily defeat this system simply by unclipping themselves from the monitor.

Conclusion: Both Pull String and Pressure Pad Systems work best when used correctly in the right application. For a good price, shop around because prices vary steeply.

Smart Caregiver Corporation is committed to providing affordable and well-built patient monitoring systems so that Caregivers can afford to keep their residents safe. Products are designed and made or assembled in the U.S.A. Smart Caregiver Customer Service is second to none. Our Smart Caregiver Service Reps can help DONs determine which system best suits our facilities' needs. Shop around and you'll find Smart Caregiver Alert Systems are priced 50% to 500% below comparable monitors offered by competitors.

Peter Bellak is the Public Relations Manager for Smart Caregivers Corporation in Petaluma California.

For more information about the Smart Caregiver line of products please contact Customer Service at 1 800 650-3637 or visit www.smartcaregiver.com

1 Year Pressure Pads

American-Made Smart Caregiver pads are made of soft FDA approved vinyl. Pads are water resistant and the cord is reinforced at the pad for heavy duty strain relief. Our Smart Caregiver pads are guaranteed for one full year. Smart Caregiver offers bed pads in two sizes (15 x 30² or 7² x 30²) Chair Pads are available in 7 X 15" or 10" x 15". For more information, please call 800 650-3637 or log on to www.smartcaregivercorp.com