

Resource Guide for Older Adults at Risk of Going Missing



Calgary Missing Older Adult Resource Network

**SEARCH IS AN
EMERGENCY**

STAY AT HOME

CALL 911

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Overview

This resource guide is a tool to support vulnerable older adults who may be at risk of going missing. The guide incorporates prevention tips, preparedness in the event someone does go missing, available resources and tips for community members if they find someone that has gone missing.

The guide is designed for individuals and caregivers of older adults who have a dementia, mental illness, or brain injury or any other reason that makes them vulnerable. Users are encouraged to refer to the sections that are relevant to their specific situation. Someone going missing is a very stressful situation and being prepared for potential missing “incidents” may help relieve that stress and give a better sense of control for individuals and caregivers. In addition, having information about the missing person readily available can better support responders starting a search.

This resource guide was developed by the Calgary Missing Older Adult Resource Network (CMOARN) and incorporates work from other jurisdictions and research by Dr. Noelannah Neubauer. More information about the Collaborative is available at the end of the guide. Feedback is welcome.

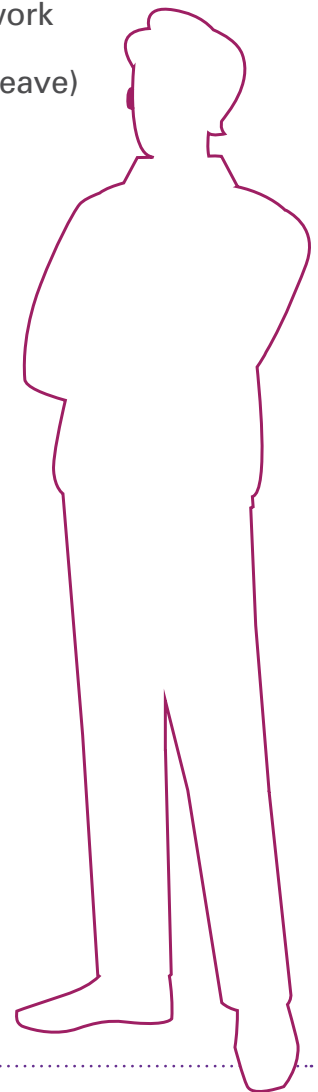
To download or order a copy of this guide, visit: calgarymissingolderadultresources.ca

Understand the Risk

Finding the right balance between a level of independence and a risk of going missing can increase the quality of life of the person at risk and reduce the anxiety or stress on everyone involved. People who have gone missing before are at greater risk of going missing again.

People Go Missing Because They are:

- Searching for something (i.e., bedroom, bathroom, personal items, food, etc.)
- Wishing to go home or to find friends or family
- Concerned about past obligations such as going to school or work
- Upset or anxious (upsetting events may trigger an impulse to leave)
- Experiencing physical discomfort (too hot, too cold, too noisy, hungry, need to use washroom)
- Experiencing medical issues (hallucinations/delusions)
- Bored, restless or looking for meaningful engagement
- Fatigued, particularly during late afternoon, early evening
- Looking for familiar places such as restaurant, supermarket, bank, etc.



Risk Assessment Tool

Adapted from work by Noelannah Neubauer, PhD, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, at the University of Alberta.

The Risk Assessment Tool is a practical way of evaluating the risk of someone going missing. An evaluation tool cannot guarantee that someone will never go missing.

Alternate versions are available for people who live alone and for long-term care homes or visit: www.agewell-nce.ca

RISK OF GETTING LOST



Low Risk

- Diagnosis of dementia
- No history of being lost
- Lives with family
- No interest in going out without having someone accompany them



Medium Risk

- Limited supervision
- History of exercising as a means of alleviating stress
- Regularly engaged in outdoor/community activities
- Becomes overwhelmed or anxious
- Identifies with earlier life experiences (i.e. going to work)
- Talks about leaving home



High Risk

- Walks alone
- Lives alone
- Prepares to go outside (puts on coat and shoes, etc)

Can transition to lesser or greater levels of risks at any moment. Need to apply education and proactive strategies as soon as possible so can still encourage **safe** wandering

STRATEGIES



Low Risk

- Education and Awareness
- Develop a prevention plan
- Prepare Herbert Protocol
- Talk to physician
- Watch for increasing risk
- ID strategies (RoadID, MedicAlert, etc)



Medium Risk

- Distraction or Redirection
- Exercise with a partner
- Use location technology
- Increased supervision



High Risk

- Location technology
- Alarms/surveillance
- Barriers and locks
- Buddy System
- Relocation

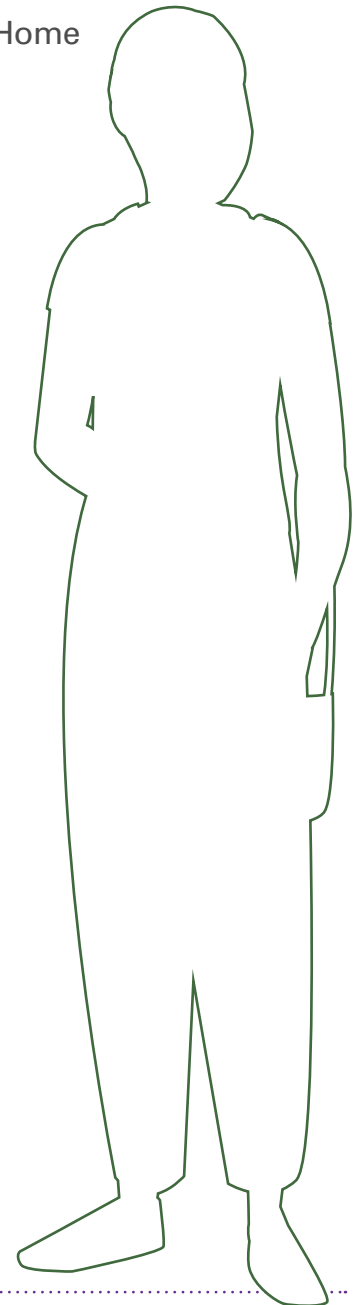
Reduce the Risk

- Connect with your doctor, health care provider and other resources for support (see page 22)
- Daily structure: routine creates habits that are more likely to be followed
- Include exercise to help limit feelings of agitation or restlessness
- Ensure needs are being met (i.e., hunger, thirst, comfort, etc)
- Avoid areas that are busy and disorienting (i.e., go shopping at less busy times)
- If you notice increased restlessness at certain times of the day, plan for extra support and activities during that time (chores: setting table, folding laundry; activities: music, puzzles, exercise; social: phone call, grocery shopping, other outings)
- Move items such as keys, purse, wallet and jacket away from the door
- If appropriate, make neighbours aware of your concerns and share your contact information with them
- Use devices that make sound when exterior doors are opened (electronic door chimes)
- Consider ID bracelet, GPS technology or Medic Alert Safely Home
www.roadid.com ■ www.medicalert.ca
- Consider painting the exterior door the colour of the walls (although this may cause agitation for some)
- Mark interior doors with visual clues (i.e., picture of toilet, bed).

Get Prepared

Home Adaptations, Technology and Wearables:

- Sew a piece of fabric with the name, address and contact phone number in a favourite jacket
- Consider the most appropriate technology (See page 8)
- Consider ID bracelet, GPS technology or Medic Alert Safely Home www.roadid.com ■ www.medicalert.ca
- Update emergency contact information on cell phones
- Complete the Herbert Protocol (see page 15) and put it on your fridge
- Complete the Carer Emergency Card for your wallet
- Complete the "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) card for their wallet
- Keep a current photo on your phone or in your wallet
- Keep a copy of the Herbert Protocol on your phone



Technology Questions to Consider

When dealing with dementia, either as someone who has been diagnosed or as a care partner, it is natural to look to technology to see how it might provide assistance. The wide variety of possible technological solutions that are available can make it difficult to find the one that fits the best.

Is Technology Right for You?

Technology can help maintain and support independence, choice, and self-determination. Technology can assist with everything from safety, to helping you stay active with things like hobbies and recreation. But technology is not always the solution. It's not a substitute for care being provided by another person.

Technology does not replace existing connections and services, it's meant to enhance and support what is already in place.

What classifies as technology?

Getting the most out of any technology requires considering the unique needs and situation of each person, no one size fits all. Here are some things to consider when making your decisions around technology.

“Technology” as we are defining it is “something that helps”. It doesn't always mean new devices or gadgets, as sometimes technology is as simple as a reminder note or phones with larger buttons. Simple solutions are often the best option.



Taking the time to consider how, where, and when to use technology is an important part of finding solutions that will work for you.

Steps to help you Find the Appropriate Solution

Identify the concern

To find the right solution, you need to clearly identify and understand the issue or problem. It may be that the best solution is not technology but is adjusting a schedule or a routine, or making use of services such as counseling or occupational therapy. Since every person's situation is unique, decisions on what might be the most useful need to be made based on what works for you, and your support team.

Define the concern

- What is the need or issue you want to address?
- What solutions have already been tried, and what were the results?
- How urgently do you need to find a solution?
- What are the consequences of leaving the issue unaddressed?
- How will the technology impact or change care?
- Who could/or needs to be part of assessing the situation and finding solutions (such as your physician, an occupational therapist, or others)

Consider the full situation

Finding the appropriate technology/tool means taking into consideration your current living situation and context, including the needs of your caregivers. Technology won't be very helpful if you aren't comfortable using it, or where to turn for help to learn how to use it.

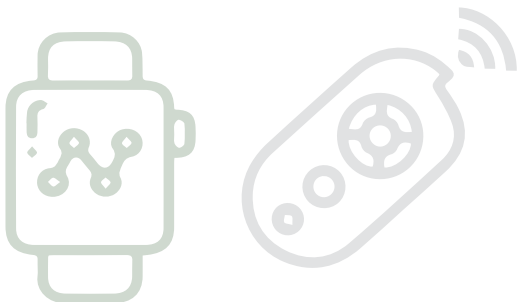
Things to consider	Yes	No
Expense: are you purchasing or renting equipment? If renting, what are the contract terms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Installation: what's required and how easy is it to install?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adaptability of the device or technology to your changing needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ongoing maintenance and updating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of use: how, when and where you will use it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training and support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you are living independently with dementia: what steps can be taken to help you remember to use the technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Considering these issues as you are making your decision can lead to a more positive experience.

Evaluate the risks

While it is impossible to know all the risks or possible outcomes, there are pros and cons to every technology solution. Here are a few things to consider:

- Under what conditions will it not work?
- What happens when it doesn't work? What are the possible consequences if it is not working?
- How easy is it to disable or to interrupt?
- How does the technology solution address and manage privacy issues?
- Are there new problems or issues that the technology could introduce?
- Are there questions around privacy, data collection, and similar issues you should consider? Who will have access to any data that the technology gathers, and for what purpose



Aim for early Introduction

Introducing the technology early, before the situation has become a crisis, can also make it easier to adopt the technology. Adopting technology can be a challenge for some but having someone show you how it can be used to access or support your interests (such as music) can help with your comfort level in using it.

Needs change over time

Expect solutions to change over time as technology solutions that work now may no longer be appropriate or useful as your dementia progresses.

Notes:

Include the person with dementia in solution discussions

If you are a caregiver remember to include the person with dementia in this conversation –what are their thoughts about possible technology solutions? Including the person with dementia in the conversation can help in finding solutions the individual is comfortable with and that are appropriate for their needs. Making sure everyone is comfortable is an ongoing process. It is also important to explore when the person living with dementia feels that technology should not be used.

Consider including information about your conversations with the person living with dementia and their thoughts and decisions around technology in their personal directive. This can help to ensure that those decisions are respected in the future.

Concluding thoughts

The use of technology offers many possible benefits, but getting the most out of any technology requires considering your unique needs and situation, no one size fits all. Most importantly, the technology solution needs to work for you. It will likely need to be modified over time to work for your specific situation.

Resources to find information on specific technology solutions:

- Alzheimer Store Canada www.alzstore.ca
- Finding your way, a guide to location technologies:
<https://tech.findingyourwayontario.ca>
- The Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation website also has guides on home modification for people living with dementia.
- Some search terms that might be helpful:
 - Assistive technology
 - Daily living aids

Consider exploring reviews of various technologies, remember though, what worked for one person may not work for you.

Printable Cue Examples

These are examples of icons that can be printed and attached to doors. They assist with wayfinding and may prevent someone from exiting a home if they are looking for one of these locations.



Emergency Cards

The Emergency Carer Card is designed to be printed, completed, folded and kept in the wallet of the caregiver.

<p>CARER CARD: ATTENTION!</p> <p>If I am sick or in in accident, the person I care for needs immediate attention.</p> <p>My name is: _____</p> <p>I care for: _____</p> <p>Relationship: _____</p>
--

<p>These contacts will know what to do:</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Cell: _____</p> <p>Relationship: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Cell: _____</p> <p>Relationship: _____</p>

Emergency Cards

The ICE Card is designed to be printed, completed, folded and kept in the wallet of the person at risk.

In Case of Emergency

Full name _____

Date of Birth _____ Blood type _____

Address _____

Cell _____ Work _____ Home _____

Current Meds _____

Conditions _____

Physician _____ Phone _____

Allergies/additional info _____

In Case of Emergency

Emergency Contact #1 _____

Relationship _____ Work phone _____

Cell phone _____ Home phone _____

Emergency Contact #2 _____

Relationship _____ Work phone _____

Cell phone _____ Home phone _____

Additional info _____

_____ Last updated _____

Herbert Protocol Form and Instructions

This form is designed to provide current information to first responders when someone is missing. Keep a copy of this completed form on top of your fridge with your Alberta Health Services Green Sleeve. For more information on the Green Sleeve, talk to your family doctor or health care provider.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Ideally provide a facial close-up and a full length picture.

Please check this box if you consent to having photo(s) shared on social media in the event that this person is missing

PERSONAL DETAILS

Full Name	
Preferred Name/Nicknames	
Other Names	
Current Address	
Home Phone	
Cell Phone	
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Date of Birth and Age	Month: Day: Year:
First language?	
Other languages spoken?	
Social Media Accounts	
Emergency Contact	
Home Phone	
Cell Phone	
Email	

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Hair colour, length and style

Wig/Hair piece YES NO

Glasses YES NO

Facial hair YES NO

Complexion/skin colour

Other identifying features

(e.g. tattoos, scars, etc)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Has a dementia diagnosis or has memory problems YES NO If Yes, please describe:

Any known risks? Describe:
(i.e. aggression, suicidal thoughts, depression, substance abuse)

Any mental health issues? Describe:
(i.e. anxiety, depression, bipolar)

Medication? YES NO

What kind? How often? What happens in the short term and long term without the medication

Is there visual, hearing, communication/speech impairment? YES NO If Yes, describe:

GENERAL INFORMATION

Any mobility issues? Describe:
(i.e. cane, walker, falls)

**Doctor/Specialist
Contact Information** Name:
Phone Number:

Is there a Power of Attorney? YES NO
Agent(s):

Is there a legal guardian? YES NO
Name:

Is there a Personal Directive? YES NO
Agent(s):

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Lives alone or with others? Describe:

Previous Addresses 1.
(indicate if childhood address) 2.
3.

**Current school, work
or volunteer organization
name and address**

Most significant job

LOCATION SERVICE

**Location Service
GPS/Medic Alert** YES NO If Yes, describe:

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

**What situations
might cause anxiety?**

(i.e. fears, phobias)

**How might they react if
worried/frightened/anxious?**

**Anything that would
cause them to behave in
a way that would put
themselves or others at risk**

**Anything that might
relax/calm them down
if they are distressed?**

Access to money? YES NO

Carrying cash? YES NO

Bank card? YES NO

**Which bank/branch
are typically visited?**

Favorite places/routines
*(i.e. church, synagogue, mosque,
cafe, grocery store, club)*

Name:

Addresses:

Hobbies

Favorite vacation spots

**Name and Contact information
of friends or family members
that they might visit**

Name:

Phone:

Address:

What Happens When You Call 911

What will happen when you call 911:

- Provide the officer with the completed Herbert Protocol and a recent photograph
- Calgary Police Service (CPS) will assess vulnerability and, based on assessment, may begin searching immediately
- As part of the missing person's assessment, CPS will ask you a variety of questions. These questions are standard protocol and will include difficult questions. These questions are not intended to be a judgment on you or the person you are caring for, they are asked in all missing person situations

What to do during the Search:

- Stay at home
- Engage with other supports, such as family and friends to either help with the search or to stay with the person who is waiting
- Look for missing items such as grocery bags, purse/wallet or transit pass

Resources that can help while waiting:

Waiting for someone to be found can be a stressful experience. The stress will continue for some even after the person is found.

- It is important you take care of yourself. Having the opportunity to talk with someone can be very helpful
- Talk with a close friend, a counsellor you may know, or someone in your faith community
- Call the Distress Centre at 403-266-4357 24 hours a day

Reuniting & Next Steps:

Reuniting with the person who was missing is an important step. The experience has been stressful, and everyone is likely to be anxious.

- Provide them with warm, dry clothing – especially if the weather has been bad
- Provide reassurance – let them know you are happy to see them
- Address medical issues – a visit to the doctor may be necessary
- Use the list of resources to find appropriate support for yourself and for the person who was missing

Resources

Essential Numbers for Seniors

9-1-1 Emergency (24-Hour)	403-SENIORS (403-736-4677) The Way In
<p>For EMERGENCY medical, fire and police response.</p> <p>Call the non-emergency police line at 403-266-1234 to report an incident that is not an emergency.</p>	<p>Information, advice and help accessing programs and benefits for older adults.</p>
8-1-1 Health Link (24-Hour)	403-266-HELP (403-266-4357) Distress Centre and SeniorConnect (24-Hour)
<p>Health advice (including dementia advice) from a registered nurse.</p>	<p>Crisis support and urgent social work response (including if you are concerned about a senior at risk in the community).</p>
3-1-1 City of Calgary (24-Hour)	403-943-1500 Access Mental Health
<p>Information on all City of Calgary services. www.calgary.ca</p>	<p>Non-urgent advice on navigating the addiction and mental health system.</p>
2-1-1 Community Resources (24-Hour)	403-705-3250 Elder Abuse Resource Line (24-Hour)
<p>Information and referrals for community and social services. www.ab.211.ca</p>	<p>Confidential information and support, or to report a suspected case of elder abuse.</p>

Telephone language interpretation service available on all lines.

Alzheimer Society of Calgary • 403-290-0110 • www.alzheimercalgary.ca

Alberta Health Services Home Care • 403-943-1920

Medic Alert: Safely Home • 1-855-581-3794 • www.medicalert.ca

Road ID 1-800-345-6336 • www.roadid.com

Caregivers Alberta 1-877-453-5088 • www.caregiversalberta.ca

If you see someone reported as missing or looks lost

A-L-E-R-T

The goal is to safely reunite the vulnerable missing person with their family, while not putting anyone else at risk. If you see a person who has been listed as missing, call 9-1-1 and follow their directions. Getting help is the most important thing.

If you see someone who looks lost or confused and you feel comfortable, follow the steps below:

Approach

- Smile, identify yourself and let them know that you would like to help them get to where they need to be
- Ask if they need help
- Speak slowly and calmly; ask simple “Yes” or “No” questions; one question at a time
- Wait 15 – 30 seconds for a response

Listen

- Avoid confrontation or argument
- Listen for key words or phrases that will help
- Be aware of their tone of voice and your tone of voice

Engage

- Use good nonverbal communication – smile
- Make eye contact and approach from the front
- Stay with the person until help arrives

React

- Getting help is most important
- “Call 9-1-1” and let them know where the person is
- Stay on the line with the communication officer and follow their directions

Talk

- If your attempt to approach them is unsuccessful, back away and give the person space. If possible stay within eyesight until help arrives.
- After the situation is resolved you may feel upset or want to talk with someone. Help is available 24/7 through the Distress Centre at 403.266.4357

Background

Calgary Missing Older Adult Resource Network (CMOARN)

In 2015, with funding from the United Way of Calgary and Area, Bowmont Seniors Assistance Association (BSAA) and **carya** commissioned an environmental scan of Silver Alert programs across North America. A steering committee comprised of Calgary Police Service, United Way of Calgary and Area, City of Calgary, Alzheimer Society of Calgary, **carya**, and BSAA was formed to develop a plan to address the issue of seniors going missing in the Calgary area.

A community conversation was held with 32 stakeholder agencies and the outcome was that an Action Team was formed under Calgary's Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy. Since 2015 a number of key activities have taken place including:

- Became a member of the International Consortium for Dementia and Wayfinding
- Advocacy for coordination of response frameworks at the municipal, provincial and national levels including legislation to support them
- Development of materials including this toolkit
- Support caregivers in the prevention of wandering and increase awareness of resources in the community

- Partnership with the University of Alberta and University of Waterloo related to research and best practices.
- Supported the simulation of a community alert system developed by the University of Alberta

Goals of the Calgary Missing Older Adult Resource Network

- Strategies are in place that will assist authorities in finding missing older adults
- Ensure that response systems are efficient and coordinated
- Create public awareness about vulnerable older adults and the resources that are in place that help find them
- Develop a network that can support a community response and monitor issues pertaining to missing vulnerable older adults; identify and implement a “silver alert” type system
- Support caregivers in the prevention of wandering and increase awareness of resources in the community

Community Partners

- Alberta Health Services
- Alzheimer Society of Calgary
- Calgary Police Service
- Calgary Fire Department
- Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens Association
- Calgary Seniors Resource Society
- **carya**
- Calgary Neighbourhoods, City of Calgary
- Dementia Network Calgary
- Distress Centre Calgary
- Jewish Family Service Calgary
- Kerby Centre
- Silvera for Seniors
- United Way of Calgary and Area

