BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

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Set Up Emergency SOS & Medical ID

Call for help fast, and let first responders see your key medical facts — even from a locked phone

Plain-English tech help from:

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Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

Your phone can call for help fast and show a paramedic your vital facts. Set up Emergency SOS (iPhone: Settings, Emergency SOS; Android: Settings, Safety & emergency) so holding the right buttons dials help and alerts your chosen contacts with your location. Fill in your Medical ID (iPhone: Health app, Medical ID; Android: Medical information) with your medications, allergies, conditions, and contacts, and turn on “Show When Locked” so responders can read it without your passcode.

Practice the button hold but always cancel before it dials, choose two or three contacts and tell them, and keep your medical details current.

1 The Short Version

Your phone has a built-in way to call emergency services fast — by pressing and holding the side buttons — and a Medical ID that shows a first responder your vital information from the lock screen, without your passcode. Setting both up takes a few minutes and could matter enormously one day.

You choose who gets alerted, what medical facts to share, and how the emergency call is triggered. Once it is set, it simply waits in the background, ready if you ever need it. This is one of the most worthwhile things you can do with a phone.

- Emergency SOS calls for help when you hold the right buttons.
- It can alert the family members you choose and share your location.
- Medical ID shows your medications, allergies, and contacts from the lock screen.
- A paramedic can see your Medical ID without needing your passcode.

> **TIP**
>
> The single most valuable piece is the Medical ID — your medications, allergies, conditions, and an emergency contact, readable by a paramedic from the locked phone. Even if you set up nothing else today, set up that.

2 Why This Is Worth a Few Minutes

In a frightening moment — a fall, chest pain, feeling faint — it can be hard to find a number, remember your medications, or tell someone what to do. A phone set up in advance does those things for you: it dials help with a button-press, tells your family where you are, and hands a paramedic the facts they need to treat you safely.

This is not about expecting the worst; it is the same sensible preparation as a smoke alarm or a spare key with a neighbor. You set it up once, hope never to need it, and are quietly glad it is there. For family members, knowing a parent's phone is set up this way is a genuine comfort.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Paramedics are trained to look for a Medical ID on both iPhones and Android phones. A list of your medications and allergies, visible at the scene, can genuinely change the care you receive — which is why it is worth getting right.

3 What Emergency SOS Actually Does

It helps to know exactly what happens, so there are no surprises. When you trigger Emergency SOS, the phone calls your local emergency number, and after the call it can send a message with your location to the emergency contacts you chose.

- Holding the correct buttons starts a countdown, then calls emergency services.
- There is a slider and a countdown, so an accidental trigger can be canceled.
- After the call, it can text your chosen contacts that you called for help, with your location.
- It works even if the phone is locked.

WATCH OUT

Because it calls real emergency services, be careful when testing — we will cover how to practice safely without actually dialing. An accidental real call ties up help that someone else may need, so always cancel a test before the countdown ends.

4 Set Up Emergency SOS on iPhone

On an iPhone you choose how SOS is triggered and who gets alerted. The setup is quick and clearly laid out.

1. Open Settings, tap Emergency SOS.
2. Choose how to trigger it — “Call with Hold” (press and hold the side and a volume button) and/or “Call with 5 Button Presses.”
3. Turn on the countdown sound if you want an audible warning.
4. Set your emergency contacts (added through your Medical ID, covered next) so they are alerted after a call.

GOOD TO KNOW

Press-and-hold the side button with a volume button is the easiest trigger for most people — a firm, deliberate hold that is hard to do by accident but simple in a crisis. Practice the motion (without completing the call) so your hands know it.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

5 Set Up Emergency SOS on Android

Android phones have the same idea, usually under a Safety or Emergency section, though the exact wording varies by brand.

1. Open Settings and look for Safety & emergency (or search “emergency”).
2. Open Emergency SOS and turn it on.
3. Choose the trigger — often pressing the power button several times quickly.
4. Set it to call emergency services and to share your location with your chosen contacts.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Many Android phones also offer an “Emergency sharing” option that keeps sharing your location with your contacts for a while after an SOS, so family can find you even as the situation unfolds.

6 Create Your Medical ID on iPhone

The Medical ID is a card of your key health facts that a first responder can open from the lock screen. You fill it in once in the Health app.

1. Open the Health app, tap your picture or initials at the top right, then tap Medical ID.
2. Tap Edit and fill in your medications, allergies, conditions, blood type, and date of birth.
3. Add emergency contacts — the people to be called — with their relationship to you.
4. Turn on “Show When Locked” and “Share During Emergency Call,” then tap Done.

> **TIP**
>
> Fill in the Medical ID as completely as you comfortably can — especially allergies, blood thinners, heart conditions, and the medications you take. These are exactly the facts a paramedic most needs and most often cannot get in a hurry.

7 Add Medical Information on Android

Android phones have an emergency medical information card too, reachable from the lock screen, that you fill in similarly.

1. Open Settings, find Safety & emergency, then Medical information (or Emergency information).
2. Enter your medications, allergies, blood type, and any conditions.
3. Add your emergency contacts.
4. Confirm it can be viewed from the lock screen in an emergency.

GOOD TO KNOW

On most Android phones a responder reaches your medical card by tapping "Emergency" on the lock screen, then "Emergency information." It is worth knowing where it lives so you could point to it, or tell family where yours is.

8 Choose Your Emergency Contacts Well

The people your phone alerts in an emergency should be chosen thoughtfully — reachable, likely to answer, and able to act or relay information.

- Pick two or three people, not just one, in case someone is unreachable.
- Choose people who usually answer their phone and can act — a nearby relative, a close friend.
- Tell them they are your emergency contacts so an unexpected alert is not confusing.
- Include at least one person who knows your medical history.

TIP

Let your chosen contacts know they are on your list, and roughly what the alert will look like. A text saying "Bill pressed his SOS" is far less alarming and more useful when they are expecting that it could come.

9 Make Sure It Works From the Lock Screen

The whole point is that help and your medical facts are reachable even when the phone is locked, so it is worth confirming that path exists.

- On the lock screen (where you would type the passcode) look for an “Emergency” option.
- That leads to an emergency dialer and to your Medical ID or Emergency information.
- Confirm your Medical ID is set to show when locked.
- No passcode is needed to reach these — that is by design, so a stranger can help you.

GOOD TO KNOW

It can feel odd that anyone can see your Medical ID without your passcode, but that is exactly the point — a paramedic or a passer-by needs to read it when you cannot unlock the phone yourself. Only the medical card and the emergency dialer are exposed, not the rest of your phone.

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10 Fall and Crash Detection

Some phones and watches can detect a hard fall or a car crash and start the emergency call for you if you do not respond — a powerful backup when you cannot reach the phone yourself.

- An Apple Watch and some iPhones offer Fall Detection and Crash Detection.
- If a hard fall is detected and you do not respond, it calls emergency services and alerts your contacts.

- These build directly on the SOS and Medical ID you are setting up here.
- There is a dedicated guide, “Turn On Fall Detection & Choose Who It Calls,” that covers this fully.

> **WATCH OUT**
> Fall Detection is one of the most reassuring features for anyone who lives alone or has had a fall before. It works hand in hand with your SOS and Medical ID — ask me to set the whole safety net up together on a visit.

11 Share Your Location With Family

Beyond emergencies, you can let trusted family see your location any time, which many families find reassuring — a quiet way to know a parent got home or to find them if they are late.

- iPhone: the Find My app lets you share your location with chosen family members.
- Android: Google Maps location sharing does the same.
- You choose who can see you and can turn it off any time.
- It is a gentle, everyday reassurance, separate from the emergency alerts.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> Location sharing is entirely your choice and fully reversible — you decide who sees you and for how long. Many families set it up both ways, so everyone can see everyone, which feels less one-sided.

12 Practice Safely — Without Calling 911

You should know how to trigger SOS and, just as importantly, how to cancel it, so a real moment is not the first time. The key is to practice the motion but always stop before the call completes.

1. Practice the button hold, but release and cancel before the countdown ends — do not let it dial.

2. On the lock screen, open the Emergency option and view your Medical ID to confirm it shows (then back out without calling).
3. Show a family member where your Medical ID lives on the lock screen.
4. If you ever do trigger it by accident, stay on the line and tell the operator it was a mistake — do not just hang up.

> **WATCH OUT**
> If an accidental emergency call does connect, do not hang up in a panic — stay on and tell them it was an accident. Hanging up can prompt them to send help or call back, using resources someone else may need.

13 Keep It Current

Your medications and contacts change over time, and the Medical ID is only as useful as it is accurate. A quick review now and then keeps it worth having.

- Update your Medical ID whenever your medications or conditions change.
- Check your emergency contacts are still the right people with current numbers.
- Review it once a year — perhaps when the clocks change, as an easy reminder.
- Let me update it for you on any visit if things have changed.

> **WATCH OUT**
> A Medical ID listing a medication you stopped years ago, or a contact who has moved, can mislead at the worst moment. It is honest and useful only if it is current — so a yearly glance is time well spent.

14 When to Call Bill

This is important enough, and personal enough, that it is worth setting up carefully and correctly rather than half-done. I set up the SOS trigger, fill in the Medical ID with you, choose and inform your contacts, and show you how to use it and how to cancel a test safely — so you and your family have real peace of mind.

I come to you, set up Emergency SOS and Medical ID on your phone and watch, turn on fall or crash detection if you want it, arrange location sharing with the family, and practice the whole thing with you gently until it feels familiar. I will leave your medical facts current and your contacts informed.

- You want Emergency SOS and Medical ID set up properly and tested safely.
- You would like fall or crash detection and location sharing added.
- You are setting this up for a parent and want it done carefully.
- Your medical details or emergency contacts need updating.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this handy. Fill in your Medical ID first, then set up and practice Emergency SOS.

I want to…	Do this…
Set up SOS (iPhone)	Settings Emergency SOS choose Call with Hold or 5 presses
Set up SOS (Android)	Settings Safety & emergency Emergency SOS on
Create Medical ID (iPhone)	Health app your initials Medical ID Edit; turn on Show When Locked
Add medical info (Android)	Settings Safety & emergency Medical information
Let family find me	Share location via Find My (iPhone) or Google Maps (Android)
Practice safely	Hold the buttons but cancel before it dials; view Medical ID from the lock screen
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

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