



**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

# The Essential Guide to Medical Profiles



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Medical profiles are quickly becoming a staple of modern life. We live in the future: technology makes it possible for everyday people to optimize their environment for success. Family members can stay more connected with long distance relatives than at any other time in history due to low airfare prices and high quality video chatting systems. Shoppers can have their groceries delivered to their doorstep before the workday even ends, with plenty of time leftover to prep dinner. Smartphone users can reply to time-sensitive work emails, text their spouse about Friday's date night plans, and read the news on an app all while managing the soccer carpool and making it to practice on time. And this is only the beginning - the sky is the limit when it comes to innovating daily life, and that includes emergency preparedness, health precautions, and general safety. One product that streamlines optimization in these areas is a medical profile.

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## WHAT ARE

# MEDICAL PROFILES?

A medical profile is an “at a glance” page or graphic that **provides any medical provider with the essential health information** about you or your loved one. Today, medical profiles are used frequently by first responders and other lay people in the community as well as by medical professionals. Medical profiles are also used by community care providers such as daycare staff, teachers, camp counselors, and athletics instructors.

An effective medical profile **alerts the reader to any immediate medical or safety needs in the case of an emergency**. It also provides critical information to medical professionals in an emergency setting who don't have previous familiarity with the case or cannot access the electronic medical charts from another facility.

Medical profiles are quickly becoming **ubiquitous for vulnerable populations** such as the elderly, infants and young children, and people with disabilities. As medical profiles become more well known, they are also gaining popularity amongst healthy adults as a way to provide a little extra emergency insurance for themselves and their children.



***An effective medical profile provides critical information to medical professionals in an emergency setting who don't have previous familiarity with the case or cannot access the electronic medical charts from another facility.***

# WHAT KINDS OF MEDICAL PROFILES ARE THERE?

There are two categories of medical profiles: internal and external. Both utilize technology to instantly transfer valuable, individualized medical information to the person accessing the profile. Accessing information quickly and efficiently can save critical seconds during an emergency and make all the difference between an ideal outcome and a less desirable one.



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## INTERNAL MEDICAL PROFILE

An internal medical profile is **an app that is already installed on your phone by the manufacturer**. Alternatively, you can purchase and download a medical profile app to your phone and fill in the requisite information. In both types, **the phone itself must be on the person experiencing the emergency and accessible to first responders**. The first responder may also have to click through a few prompted steps on the phone in order to get in via emergency access, as the phone will likely be password protected for anything other than emergency information. It is also possible that the first responder will forget to search for emergency information on the phone altogether, as these types of medical profiles are **internal to the phone** and completely invisible to the naked eye. They **must be specifically searched for within the phone** in order to be viewed.

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## EXTERNAL MEDICAL PROFILE

An external medical profile is an **ID card or QR sticker** (a sticker with a scannable code) that allows any bystander to **scan the code** on the card or sticker and immediately **view the person's medical information** in the case of an emergency. A specific app is not required, though one will usually be available for additional flexibility of use. An external medical profile includes all the features of an internal medical profile, along with the addition of enhanced features like QR stickers that provide a clear visual cue for any bystander or care provider. These stickers **bypass the need for knowledge of how to use a variety of different types of smartphones** (for example, a first responder might be an Android user while the person in distress has an iPhone) and decrease the time needed to access critical medical information by precious seconds.

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## Should I use an internal medical profile, or an external one?

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The answer may differ based on the individual needs of you and your family, and the resources you currently have available. However, using the below checklist can help you make an informed decision so that you can add medical profiles to your emergency and safety preparedness household resources as soon as possible.

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# Ten Steps to Choosing a Medical Profile

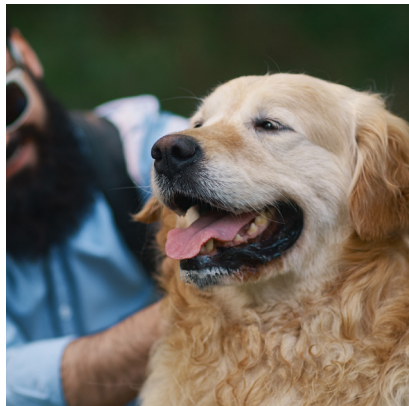


## 01 - FAMILY

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### WHO TO CONSIDER

Consider who in your family may benefit. Elderly parents and people with allergies or disabilities in your life may be the first to come to mind. However, emergencies don't choose a certain group. Do you have children who go to daycare or school? Do you ever go for a walk or jog alone? A medical profile, especially one that provides a clear visual cue via a QR sticker affixed to a backpack or keychain, could be the perfect solution for you and each of your family members.



## 02 - PETS

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### WHO TO CONSIDER

Consider usage for pets. Though a pet doesn't carry a phone and thus can't utilize an internal medical profile, an external medical profile in the form of a QR sticker on their collar tag could provide a much easier solution than a microchip if they get lost and are found by a Good Samaritan.




## 03 - PROFESSIONAL CIRCLE

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### WHO TO CONSIDER

Consider who in your professional circle may benefit. Do you work in healthcare, education, childcare, or somewhere with a large body of employees? A standardized medical profile system could enhance the experience of company staff as well as clients and customers.



# Ten Steps to Choosing a **Medical Profile**



## **04 - EASE OF USE AND ACCESS**

Consider need for ease of use and access, including fast set up, technical support, and constant uptime. When evaluating potential medical profile providers, vet their website as well as customer reviews for this information. The profile should be relatively easy to set up and test. Technical support should be available in the form of consistent and reliable customer service. “Constant uptime” means that the company has invested in a strong and reliable storage system (such as cloud-based data housing) so that critical medical information can always be accessed.

## **06 - TRAVEL PLANS**

Consider travel plans in addition to emergency preparedness. Are you a frequent traveler for work purposes? Or are you and your family planning a vacation sometime in the next year or two? In cases like this, an external medical profile may be the most sensible option due to its universality.

## **05 - ENVIRONMENT**

Consider any environments other than the home where members of your family regularly spend time. At work, school, and daycare, there may often be new staff who do not have previous familiarity with you or your family member’s medical needs and other details. In this type of scenario, a QR sticker provides a discreet yet clear cue for anyone to access critical information when it is needed.

## **07 - YOUR CURRENT SYSTEM**

Consider your current system, if it exists. Perhaps you already have at least some medical information stored on your phone, but it isn’t instantly accessible or complete. An external medical profile in the form of a scannable ID card and set of QR stickers could be the perfect augmentation to your current internal profile on your phone.

# Ten Steps to Choosing a Medical Profile



## **08 - Consider your budget.**

Evaluate the cost of the product in conjunction with the amount you have allocated for emergency preparedness and general safety items for you and your family.



## **09 - Consider durability and longevity.**

This is especially relevant when using an external medical profile that includes a QR sticker. Is the QR sticker waterproof? Is it likely to come off at some point, or will it stay permanently affixed to a variety of surfaces?



## **10 - Consider any privacy concerns.**

Do any apps used for medical profiles ensure HIPAA compliance for the protection of your personal information? Does the medical profile house your data internally, or simply transmit your data from a secure storage point to the viewer when the QR code is scanned?



# Questions to Ask When Choosing a Medical Profile

*Many websites you view in your research may provide a Frequently Asked Questions page to go through some of the most common questions. From company to company, these FAQs might not vary too much. Below are some unique FAQs as well as some SAQs (Should Ask Questions) that will help you save time and energy while searching for the right medical profile system to fit your needs.*

**01** Is it easy to set up?

**06** Is it applicable for my pet?

**02** Is it durable?  
Is it waterproof?

**07** Is it secure?

**03** Is it applicable for  
everyone in my family?

**08** Is it simple enough that  
children can use it, or  
does it provide QR stickers  
that can be affixed to my  
children's belongings?

**04** Does it require knowledge  
of a specific type of  
smartphone (such as  
Android or iPhone) or can it  
be used across platforms?

**09** How much does it cost? Are  
there subscription models  
and price tiers available? Is  
there a free version that I can  
use to test the product?

**05** Is it flexible? For example,  
can current location be  
adjusted while traveling?  
Can prescriptions be  
updated easily?

**10** Does it complement my  
current system? Does it provide  
something that I don't already  
have, such as a scannable ID  
card or QR stickers?

# Common Myths

As with every industry, product, or service, there can be a lot of misleading information out there - especially if you are using the internet for research. It can be confusing and time-consuming to try to sort helpful information from misinformation. With that in mind, here are some common myths that you might find during your searching, and what the reality of those myths are.



## MYTH

Medical profiles are all the same.



## MYTH

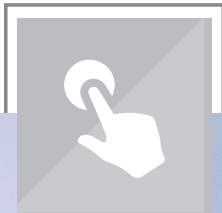
Medical profiles aren't secure.

## REALITY

Medical profiles vary greatly in scope and quality of services. Therefore it is important to vet certain product aspects before making a choice (see *Ten Steps to Choosing a Medical Profile* earlier in this document).

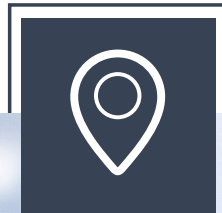
## REALITY

A good medical profile company will assure you that your confidential information is protected. A great medical profile company will even assure you that your data is not directly stored on a server, but rather in a "cloud" and simply transmitted from the cloud via a safeguarded portal at the moment of access.



**MYTH**

Medical profiles are only of use for the elderly or the chronically ill.



**MYTH**

I already have my medical information filled in on my phone. I don't need another system.



**MYTH**

Medical profiles may be important for emergencies, but this can't help me in my daily life.

**REALITY**

Medical profiles can be of use to a wide variety of people in a wide range of situations - even non-medical emergencies like a child getting temporarily lost in an airport during travel.

**REALITY**

Storing medical information on your phone is a good first step, but it may be too difficult for a Good Samaritan or medical first responder to access. A medical profile that provides a discreet yet clear visual cue such as a scannable QR sticker can be the perfect complement to the medical information stored on your phone.

**REALITY**

Medical profiles can be widely applicable in a range of situations that might arise in daily life. For example, a pet might get lost and be found by someone who lives on a neighboring street but has no way of reaching you. A scannable QR code on your pet's collar tag provides a quick and easy way for this person to access your contact information and alert you directly of your pet's location.