

Don't let a con-artist rip you off

Many con-artists prey on people's desires to find miracle cures for chronic conditions and fatal diseases.

To outsmart con-artists, remember these tips:

- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Don't let greed or excitement overcome common sense. Wait 24 hours and consult a trusted friend or lawyer before making any decisions.
- Be wary of high pressure tactics, need for quick decisions, demands for cash only, or high-yield-low-risk investments.



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Take a stand

- Join or help organize a Neighborhood Watch group. Make sure the meeting sites are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Work with local law enforcement to improve responses to all victims or witnesses of crime. Role-play how people with disabilities can handle threatening situations.
- Work with rehabilitation centers and advocacy groups to offer a presentation to schools and other community organizations on the needs or concerns of individuals with disabilities.

National Crime Prevention Council
2345 Crystal Drive, 5th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202
www.ncpc.org

The National Citizen's Crime Prevention Campaign, sponsored by NCPC, is substantially funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

Distribution made possible in part by a grant from ADT Security Systems, Inc.

CRIME PREVENTION FOR PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

IVC Distributed as a community service by the
Irvine Valley College Police Department

Safety First!

**BE AWARE. STAY ALERT.
REMAIN CALM AND CONFIDENT.**

Look out for yourself:

- Be cautious and aware of your surroundings, whether on the street, in an office building or at the shopping mall. Stay alert when driving, or waiting for a bus or subway.
- Send the message that you are calm, confident, and know where you are going.
- Be realistic about your limitations. Avoid places or situations that put you at risk.
- Know the neighborhoods where you live and work. Check out the locations of police and fire stations, public telephones, hospitals, restaurants or stores that are open and accessible.
- Avoid establishing predictable activity patterns. Vary your daily routines. By never altering your schedule, you increase your vulnerability to crime.

Before you go on vacation:

- Plan ahead. If you are traveling by car, get maps and plan your route. Have the car checked by your mechanic or a knowledgeable friend before you leave.
- Leave the numbers of your passport, driver's license, credit cards, and travelers' checks with a trusted adult.

- Put lights and a radio on timers to create the illusion that someone is at home while you are away. Leave shades, blinds and curtains in normal positions.
- Stop mail and deliveries or ask a neighbor to take them in.

At home:

- Install approved locks on all your doors. Sturdy deadbolt locks are best. Make sure you can easily use the locks you install.
- Install peepholes on front and back doors at your eye level. This is especially important if you use a wheelchair.
- Get to know your neighbors. Watchful neighbors who look out for you, as well as themselves, are a frontline defense against crime.
- If you have difficulty speaking, have a friend record a message (giving your name, address, and type of disability) to use in emergencies. Keep the tape in a recorder next to your phone.
- Ask your police department to conduct a free home security survey to help identify your individual needs.

Disabled people face many physical challenges. This makes them vulnerable to would-be assailants who assume the disabled are incapable of protecting themselves.

Out and about:

- If possible, go with a friend.
- Stick to well-lit, well-travelled streets.
- Avoid shortcuts through vacant lots, wooded areas, parking lots or alleys.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Carry a purse close to your body — not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- If you use a wheelchair, keep your purse or wallet tucked snugly between you and the inside of the chair.
- If you use a knapsack, make sure it is closed securely.
- In case of an emergency, always carry your medical information.
- Consider carrying a portable cell phone in your vehicle.

On public transportation:

- Use well-lighted, busy stops. Stay near other passengers. Sit by the driver.
- Stay alert! Do not doze or daydream!
- If someone harasses you, make a loud noise or say, "Leave me alone." If that does not work, hit the emergency signal on the bus or train.

