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Smartphones can be a powerful tool that can go beyond placing calls. I noticed when teaching a free class on smartphones, sponsored by the Rossmoor Recreation Department, that many owners do not have an emergency contact on their smartphones.

Back in the day, people kept this information in their wallets. However, today first responders look for a smartphone on a person to provide emergency contact information. This information can be accessed from the lock screen without first responders needing to know **one's passcode**.

For Apple devices, go to the health feature that looks like a white square with a red heart and create a Medical ID. **One can select from one's contacts an emergency contact.**

Mary Hardy at the Tice Creek Fitness Center witnessed a resident who had collapsed and she used his smartphone to access his emergency contact, his wife. Hardy called 911 and the **resident's wife. He was so grateful that the next day he sent Hardy flowers.**

Android smartphones do not have the Apple health feature, but one can download a free app from Google Play that mimics the Apple health feature. That app is called Medical ID (Free): In Case of Emergency.

By using either the Apple Medical ID feature or Medical ID (Free): In Case of Emergency for an **Android smartphone, first responders can access one's emergency** contact without needing a passcode, which protects **the user's** privacy. Smartphones should be an aide for the user not a burden.