

Good health gift ideas

For many people, Christmas has deep religious significance; for others, it's simply a time to relax and enjoy a few days off work. But for almost everyone, this time of year has traditionally become one of celebration.

Throughout many societies it is commonplace to exchange gifts or simply 'season's greetings', and to express sentiments of peace and goodwill. Wishes of good health usually accompany greetings at this time of year; so, perhaps some healthy gift ideas could be worth a thought as well.

The original gifts of Christmas were reported to be gold, frankincense and myrrh. And whilst it's unlikely they're on too many shopping lists today there are actually websites offering these items as a "deluxe three box set" for around \$50.

Of course, if jewellery is what you'd like to give, or receive, you could consider something from Medic Alert. Although, a Medic Alert gift is not *just* a piece of high-quality jewellery, it also provides protection for you and your family – 24 hours a day. On each bracelet or necklet, your personal emergency information is custom engraved, together with the 24-hour hotline phone number for health and emergency personnel to access if necessary. The Medic Alert system also provides a confidential national database, staffed by trained personnel, which holds important additional information such as current medications, doctor's name and next-of-kin.

Just about anyone will benefit from the gift of a Medic Alert bracelet or necklet; but it will be especially helpful for those people with food, drug, chemical or insect allergies; people with an implant such as a pacemaker; people with conditions such as diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, Alzheimer's, Crohn's or Parkinson's disease; or people with special needs or on special medication. Medic Alert is the ultimate in patient protection in emergency situations or unforeseen adverse events.

There is a wide range of Medic Alert products – solid gold, gold filled, sterling silver or stainless steel – in various designs. Check out the website at: www.medicalert.org.au

It seems sometimes, there is much more emphasis on the gifts than the goodwill; with more expensive and sophisticated gadgets being among the most fancied gift suggestions.

So-called smart phones can now provide just about every service imaginable; even facilitating phone calls! And miniature music machines can contain thousands of songs or instrumentals downloaded from computers. "Pads" and "tablets" are now purchased from electronics stores rather than stationers or pharmacies. We've got *iPhones*, *iPods* and *iPads*; maybe sometime soon we might get a Christmas *iPod* with some extra apple in with the mixed fruit.

Meanwhile, if you are really electronically inclined, you might consider a home-use blood pressure measuring device (called a sphygmomanometer by the medicos); it's a useful gift for someone whose blood pressure might need monitoring. And for people with diabetes the now miniature-size blood glucose measuring machines are a must – the new ones are even smaller than the *iPod* type music machine, and with the added bonus of no risk of industrial deafness with regular use.

If it's your teeth and gums that need stimulating, then the vibrating, oscillating and pulsating electronic toothbrushes will do the job. The expense might just save you an extra visit or two to the dentist.

Still searching for ideas? How about a first aid kit? There are ready prepared varieties for work, home or keeping in the car; or your pharmacist can help you tailor-make one for your own personal needs. And if you already have a first aid kit, make sure the contents are usable and not out of date. Ask at your local Self Care Pharmacy for more information and pick up a *First Aid in the Home* fact card. Phone the Pharmaceutical Society on 1300 369 772 or check out the website www.psa.org.au for the nearest location.