

Hospital group says 'alarm fatigue' can be deadly

April 8 2013, by Lindsey Tanner

(AP)—Constantly beeping alarms in hospitals are being linked to patient deaths and other dangers in a new alert from the Joint Commission.

The alarms can lead to "noise [fatigue](#)," and doctors and nurses sometimes inadvertently ignore the sounds when there's a real patient emergency, possibly resulting in treatment delays that endanger patients.

That's according to the alert issued Monday by the Joint Commission hospital accrediting group.

The group says a government database lists more than 500 deaths potentially linked with hospital alarms in recent years.

The commission says hospital leaders need to address the problem and train [staffers](#) in safe alarm management.

The Joint Commission accredits more than 10,000 U.S. hospital and [health care organizations](#). Hospitals covet accreditation and following commission advice is key to maintaining it.

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