

Snowed under: The personal airbag that could save a skier's life when an avalanche hits

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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Skiers can protect themselves against avalanches - with a personal airbag which inflates around the head in an emergency to protect the wearer from serious injury. The Snowpulse Life Bag fits inside a non-bulky backpack but rapidly inflates with gas on the pull of an emergency handle.



A spokesman for the Swiss-based firm said: 'Our products significantly increase survival chances in case of avalanches. The airbags are designed to provide the best personal protection, while remaining light, compact and user friendly. The airbag is said to be able to keep the wearers head out of the snow offering shock and trauma protection.

In addition time is saved during rescue because the airbag is easy to see and locate on the surface. The system is also said to be easy and cheap to re-use. In the event of an avalanche, pulling the handle is enough to inflate the airbag in three seconds with air from a compact cartridge. As soon as the airbag is inflated, it protects the wearer against shocks and pulls him or her up.

Some winter sports enthusiasts have questioned whether skiers would remember to pull the cord if they felt an avalanche starting underfoot. And the spokesman conceded: 'The Life Bag will increase your chances of survival; however it does NOT guarantee your safety during an avalanche. 'You must not take more risks just because you have a Snowpulse airbag! 'It is Intended for winter sport amateurs and professionals, as part of the safety equipment that should always be carried along with a beacon, probe and shovel.'



The personal airbag inflates around the head in an emergency to protect the wearer from serious injury. But it relies on the wearer to pull a cord.

Avalanche snowfield tests done with 90kg dummies have also emphasized the role of the airbag. It was shown that an airbag around the head and on the upper body causes the victim to 'float' upwards in the snow flow and leave the head facing upwards.

The bag costs between £650 and £760, depending on the size.