



Social Isolation and Loneliness

How a quarantine or shutdown may affect how you feel.

What is social isolation?

Not having close connections to others, such as friends and family.

What is loneliness?

The feeling of being alone, even if you have social contacts.



Know the signs and risk factors

- Little or no contact with family or friends
- Less health care support and preventive care
- Changes in your physical or mental health (e.g. feeling anxiety, weight gain or loss, etc.)
- Staying away from routine social events (e.g. church, clubs, dining out)
- Loss or lack of access to resources (e.g. school, health centers, etc.)

Loneliness has increased due to COVID-19

Nearly
1 in 3



Americans report feelings of loneliness or social isolation

Are you at higher risk for loneliness? You may be if you are an older adult, live alone, can't leave your home, encounter discrimination where you live, have low income, or live in a nursing or group home.

The impact on your health

Social isolation and loneliness can have both short and long-term effects on your mental health. This may include:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Mistrust of others
- Decline in memory or other thinking skills

Loneliness can also have a big impact on your physical health. This can lead to major health concerns, such as:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Weight gain or obesity
- Weakened immune system
- Inflammation

Tips on being less socially isolated

Increase your time with others in a meaningful way. Take part in more in-person events or shared hobbies you enjoy. Connect with people on social media. Join a virtual group talk or use video phone calls. These are some ways that can help you combat social isolation and feelings of loneliness.

Talk to your health plan care manager or doctor. They can direct you to services and community programs that can help.



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