



Social Isolation and Loneliness

How social distancing, quarantining, and shutdowns may affect how you feel.

What is social isolation?

The lack of social contact or relationships, both physical and psychological.

What is loneliness?

The subjective feelings of isolation or being alone.



Know the signs and risk factors

- Decreased or no interaction with family and friends
- Less medical support and preventative care
- Changes in physical or mental health (e.g. feeling anxiety, weight gain or loss, etc.)
- Deviation from routine social activities (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

Approximately

1 in 3



Americans report feelings of loneliness or social isolation

Are you at higher risk for loneliness? If you are an older adult, an individual of color, have low economic income, or live in a nursing facility, assisted living facility, or a group home, you may be impacted even more than others.

The impact on your health

Social isolation and loneliness can have both short- and long-term effects on your mental health including:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Mistrust of others
- Cognitive decline and dementia

Loneliness can also seriously impact the way you feel physically, sometimes leading to major health concerns, including:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Obesity
- Weakened immune system
- Inflammation

Tips on being less socially isolated

Increase your meaningful social interactions in-person or through virtual social groups, social media connections, or other uses of technology. These are some of the best ways to combat social isolation and feelings of loneliness.

Your health plan care manager and primary care provider can direct you to valuable resources and community programs that can help.

