

Understanding loneliness and social isolation can help your health¹

1 in 5 Americans always or often feels lonely or socially isolated.²

The good news—no matter your situation, there are things you can do to get the help and support you may need.

FEELINGS OF LONELINESS CAN HAPPEN—EVEN WHEN SURROUNDED BY OTHERS

It's common to experience feelings of loneliness, even when surrounded by friends and family. Loneliness is a feeling of sadness or distress about being by ourselves or feeling disconnected from the world around us. It can strike when we don't feel a sense of belonging or have social connections to friends, neighbors or others.

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

If so, you are not alone. Up to 43% of older adults are impacted by loneliness, and that can have implications on your health.³

Working on ways to help you feel less lonely and get more socially connected can help you decrease your risk of stroke, dementia and Alzheimer's disease.^{4,5}

SOCIAL ISOLATION CAN OCCUR WHEN YOU'RE PHYSICALLY ALONE

Social isolation happens when we're separated from other people and don't have social connections. Sometimes this is because of life situations, like recovering from surgery, having children who live far away or being a caretaker. It can also occur when friends or loved ones pass away, or if it feels too hard to get out of the house.

USE YOUR DOCTOR FOR HELP

It's important to have a good relationship with your doctor to talk about challenges in your everyday life, including loneliness, anxiety or depression. Your doctor can help if they know what's bothering you.



Choose a doctor with whom you can speak easily and openly. Ask friends, relatives and other medical professionals for recommendations.



Bring a list of questions and concerns with you, especially if you've been feeling down or stressed, and ask as many questions as you need for clarity and understanding.



Answer your doctor's questions about your physical and mental health honestly to ensure the right diagnosis and treatment.



Bring a friend or relative for support if you know you'll be discussing serious topics, like surgery or a recent diagnosis.



Good news

There are resources in your community to help you create and build social connections



Stay connected and engaged

- **Talk about it.** Share your feelings or challenges with your family members, friends or counselor, who can be there to listen, and might have ideas that can help.
- **Connect locally.** Make new friends by going to your community center, attending neighborhood events, signing up for local groups and classes, or visiting a Humana in your neighborhood.⁶
- **Get out.** Transportation services can help you get out and about, even if it's just to grab coffee or pick up groceries.
- **Care for a pet.** Enjoy companionship by having a dog, cat or other pet.
- **Join a club.** Find a group for hobbies you enjoy, like playing bridge, golfing or crafting.
- **Get active.** Join an outdoor club or walking group, like SilverSneakers®.⁷
- **Volunteer.** Search for a cause that's meaningful to you and sign up. You've gained a lot of expertise in your life, and people can really benefit from that.



Connect with these resources for help

- **Area Agencies on Aging (AAA):** Supports finding transportation and in-home services. www.n4a.org
- **Connect2Affect:** Connects people to transportation, volunteer programs, senior centers and more. www.connect2affect.org
- **Eldercare Locator:** Connects older Americans and their caregivers with trustworthy local support resources. www.eldercare.gov or **1-800-677-1116 (TTY: 711)**
- **Friendship Line:** A 24-hour, toll-free Friendship Line to lend a caring ear and have a friendly conversation if you're feeling lonely or depressed. **1-800-971-0016**
- **Mental Health America:** Gives you access to local and online support groups, community events, volunteer opportunities and more. www.mentalhealthamerica.net
- **VolunteerMatch:** Helps you find volunteer opportunities nearby. www.volunteermatch.org

¹<http://populationhealth.humana.com/documents/Loneliness-Toolkit.pdf>

²Kaiser Family Foundation, Aug. 2018, <https://www.kff.org/report-section/loneliness-and-social-isolation-in-the-united-states-the-united-kingdom-and-japan-an-international-survey-introduction/>

³Researchers Confront an Epidemic of Loneliness, The New York Times, September 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/06/health/loneliness-aging-health-effects.html?_r=1

⁴<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/482179>

⁵Valtorta NK, Kanaan M, Gilbody S, et al. Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for coronary heart disease and stroke: systematic review and meta-analysis of longitudinal observational studies. *Heart* 2016;102:1009-1016.

⁶Visit www.humana.com/humana-neighborhood-centers to find a location near you.

⁷Your plan may include SilverSneakers as a benefit. Check your Coverage of Benefits or call the number on the back of your Humana member ID card to see what's included on your plan.

This material is provided for informational use only and should not be construed as medical advice or used in place of consulting a licensed medical professional.

Humana is a Medicare Advantage HMO, PPO and PFFS organization with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in any Humana plan depends on contract renewal.

Important!

At Humana, it is important you are treated fairly.

Humana Inc. and its subsidiaries do not discriminate or exclude people because of their race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion. Discrimination is against the law. Humana and its subsidiaries comply with applicable Federal Civil Rights laws. If you believe that you have been discriminated against by Humana or its subsidiaries, there are ways to get help.

- You may file a complaint, also known as a grievance:
Discrimination Grievances, P.O. Box 14618, Lexington, KY 40512-4618
If you need help filing a grievance, call **1-877-320-1235** or if you use a **TTY**, call **711**.
- You can also file a civil rights complaint with the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at **<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>**, or by mail or phone at **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, **1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)**.

Complaint forms are available at **<https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>**.

Auxiliary aids and services, free of charge, are available to you.

1-877-320-1235 (TTY: 711)

Humana provides free auxiliary aids and services, such as qualified sign language interpreters, video remote interpretation, and written information in other formats to people with disabilities when such auxiliary aids and services are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate.

Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you.

1-877-320-1235 (TTY: 711)

Español (Spanish): Llame al número arriba indicado para recibir servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

繁體中文 (Chinese): 撥打上面的電話號碼即可獲得免費語言援助服務。

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese): Xin gọi số điện thoại trên đây để nhận được các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí.

한국어 (Korean): 무료 언어 지원 서비스를 받으려면 위의 번호로 전화하십시오.

Tagalog (Tagalog – Filipino): Tawagan ang numero sa itaas upang makatanggap ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad.

Русский (Russian): Позвоните по номеру, указанному выше, чтобы получить бесплатные услуги перевода.

Kreyòl Ayisyen (French Creole): Rele nimewo ki pi wo la a, pou resevwa sèvis èd pou lang ki gratis.

Français (French): Appelez le numéro ci-dessus pour recevoir gratuitement des services d'aide linguistique.

Polski (Polish): Aby skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej, proszę zadzwonić pod wyżej podany numer.

Português (Portuguese): Ligue para o número acima indicado para receber serviços linguísticos, grátis.

Italiano (Italian): Chiamare il numero sopra per ricevere servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti.

Deutsch (German): Wählen Sie die oben angegebene Nummer, um kostenlose sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zu erhalten.

日本語 (Japanese): 無料の言語支援サービスをご要望の場合は、上記の番号までお電話ください。

فارسی (Farsi)

برای دریافت تسهیلات زبانی بصورت رایگان با شماره فوق تماس بگیرید.

Diné Bizaad (Navajo): Wóda hí béésh bee hani'í bee wolta'ígíí bich'í' hódíílnih éí bee t'áá jiik'eh saad bee áká'ánída'áwo'déé nika'adoowoł.

العربية (Arabic)

الرجاء الاتصال بالرقم المبين أعلاه للحصول على خدمات مجانية للمساعدة بلغتك