



## Social isolation awareness

We all know human connection is critical to our well-being. We want to feel valued, worthy, accepted, included and loved. This is important at all stages of life.

Sadly, as we age, the risk of social isolation increases. About 24 percent of Canadians over 65 report feeling isolated from others and wish they could participate in more social activities.

It doesn't need to be this way. We can work together towards a solution.

### Social Isolation Awareness Month

Each October, we run our Social Isolation Awareness Month campaign to help raise funds and awareness of social isolation. [Sign up here](#) to be part of this year's campaign.

### More facts about social isolation in Canada

- An estimated 30 percent of Canadians are at risk of becoming socially isolated.
- Risk factors include living alone, being 80 or older, having multiple chronic health problems, lacking transportation, lower income, changing family structures and being a caregiver.
- Isolation can happen during life transitions – like moving from work to retirement, losing a spouse, or experiencing an illness/disability and changes to our mobility.
- Isolation can lead to poor physical and mental health.
- People 65 years and older have the highest suicide rate of any other group.
- Not everyone experiences the negative consequences of social isolation — some people prefer to be alone. It's a personal experience.
- Loneliness and social isolation aren't the same things. Loneliness results when there's a difference between the types of social relationships we want and what we perceive we have. We can be surrounded by people and still feel lonely.

### What can we do about social isolation?

Individuals, government, organizations, researchers and businesses each have a role to play in helping to keep older adults socially engaged.

While some parts of the potential solution require government involvement (e.g. effective transportation systems), there are steps we can each take to improve the quality of life for ourselves, neighbours, friends and family members—simply staying connected with others is an excellent place to start.



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