

Social Isolation & Loneliness

What is social isolation?

Social isolation happens when a person has little or no contact with other people. Isolation may be over a short or long time period. It's a physical state of not being around others.

What is loneliness?

Loneliness is a feeling of being alone, empty, or separated from others. It's an emotional state. It can be felt even when people are surrounded by others.



Social isolation & loneliness impact each other.

Social isolation may lead to loneliness. Not being around others for a long period of time can leave people feeling very lonely.

Loneliness may lead to social isolation. Feeling lonely for a long time can make it hard to connect with others.

Sometimes isolation and feelings of loneliness may happen at the same time without one being caused by the other.



Social isolation and loneliness affect a person's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

It can lead to health problems like heart disease (e.g., stroke, heart attack), mental health problems (e.g., depression, cognitive decline, dementia), and pre-mature or early death.



A person may be surrounded by people and feel lonely.

A person may be socially isolated and not feel lonely.

Social Isolation and loneliness can affect anyone, regardless of age, income, gender, religious beliefs, or employment status.



What can you do about it?

- Connect with friends and family through technology (e.g., phone, text, video chat).
- Participate in community events.
- Try new things, (e.g., music, painting, curling).
- Make new connections—volunteer, join a social club, or group activity (e.g., new parents group chat, bird watching group, online book club, swim class).
- Reach out to people and support each other.



Connect or Stay Connected



For more information about social isolation and loneliness and to find support in Alberta, call **811** or **211**. Talk to a health or social care provider.