

COVID-19

Coping with loneliness

The need to stay at home and limit contact with others is important right now, but it can be lonely and isolating. Loneliness can take a toll on both our mental and physical health. Try these tips to stay connected and positive.

Reach out virtually.

A smartphone or computer can be a lifeline for social connection. Call, text, or video chat with friends and family. Older relatives especially may feel cut off and will value your call. Maybe you could host a virtual family gathering or happy hour with friends using an app like FaceTime, WhatsApp, or Zoom.

You could also explore apps that let you play games with others. Games can be a fun way to connect with friends. And they're also a good way to relieve stress.

Take care of your health.

When you're stuck at home, it may be easy to spend a lot of time sleeping, snacking, or watching TV. You'll probably feel better if you try to stay on a normal routine. So try to get up and go to bed at your usual times. And remember to eat healthy foods and be active.



Remember that you're doing the right thing.

Staying home may be boring and lonely. It's especially hard for people who thrive on social connection. But you can feel good about what you're doing. Staying home helps you protect yourself, your neighbors, and those you care about.

Look for ways to help.

Being a helper can keep you connected to others. Websites like NextDoor can be a source of information about neighbors who need support. For example, older adults in your area might need basic supplies or simply someone to check on them. Just take precautions, like keeping your distance from others and washing your hands well after you go out.

You may also be able to help your community. Here are some ideas. If you can:

- ✓ **Check into donating blood—it's an urgent need in many areas.**
- ✓ **Give online to food banks and other aid organizations.**
- ✓ **Buy online gift cards from local businesses.** This can help them survive until they can open again.

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