

Talking with Medicare Patients about Loneliness and Isolation

Loneliness is a silent epidemic. By talking about loneliness and social isolation, you can help reduce the stigma and address barriers to social connection.

Loneliness and social isolation can shorten a life by up to 15 years and increase the risk of:

- Cognitive decline
- Dementia (50% increase), Alzheimer's disease
- Difficulty with daily living tasks
- ED and SNF admissions
- High BP, stroke, heart disease
- Insomnia
- Lack of exercise, obesity
- Mental health disorders, anxiety, depression
- Stress that triggers chronic inflammation, reduced immunity, chronic diseases
- Suicide

Questions to ask older patients

How often do you feel lonely?

Do you have a strong social support network?



Scan for video



Senior-friendly resources for social connections and community supports



Friendship Line California - Friendly conversation and emotional support for adults 18+. Phone: **(888) 670-1360**

Website: ioaging.org/friendship-line-california



SilverSneakers - No-cost fitness classes in person or online for eligible adults 65+ in select Medicare plans. Website: tools.silversneakers.com



AARP - Loneliness assessment tool and support services locator.

Website: connect2affect.org



National Council on Aging - Guidance for aging well and a senior center locator. Website: tinyurl.com/NCOAconnect



National Institute on Aging - Tips for staying connected in English and Spanish. Website: tinyurl.com/NIAconnect