

Published on *VirginiaNavigator* (<https://virginiannavigator.org>)

Self-Assessment: Is Isolation Affecting Me?

What is isolation?

Isolation is more than being alone. It's the result of feeling detached physically or psychologically, or being disconnected from support groups of family, friends and community. Is Isolation affecting me?

Loneliness and isolation are not the same thing.

Loneliness (also known as subjective isolation) denotes how people perceive their experience and whether or not they feel isolated. Objective isolation involves quantifiable measurements, such as the size of one's social network (and the frequency of engagement with it), availability of transportation, and ability to access resources and information.

Isolation is a growing health epidemic.

More than 8 million adults age 50 and older are affected by isolation. The health risks of prolonged isolation are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Isolation in older adults is rarely caused by a single event.

More often, it's the result of multiple causes, including poor physical and mental health, poorly designed communities, and major life events such as loss and retirement. Risk factors include:



Transportation Challenges

Lack of accessible
and affordable
transportation
options
Driving retirement

Volunteer-based ride
programs
Livable/age-friendly
community initiatives

Poor Health and Well-being

Untreated
hearing loss
Mobility impairments
Frailty
Poor mental health

Falls prevention
programs
Chronic disease
self-management

Life Transitions, Role Loss or Change

Leaving the
workforce
Loss of a partner
or friends
Becoming
a caregiver

Support groups
Lifelong learning
Senior centers
Creative/artful aging

Societal Barriers

Ageism
Lack of
opportunities for
older adults to
engage and
contribute

Intergenerational
programs
Lifelong learning
Policies to support
an older workforce

Lack of Access and Inequality	Poverty Rural living Marginalized groups (racial/ethnic minorities, LGBT, etc)	Resiliency and empowerment models Home-sharing models Technology training
-------------------------------------	---	--

Self-Assessment Tool

Connecting with others is something that improves our quality of life.

Connect2Affect has created a [Social Isolation Self-Assessment](#) tool for social isolation that you can take for yourself or someone you know. Completing the self-assessment will help you understand how connected you are and provide you with helpful resources.

Connect2Affect is collaborative effort spearheaded by AARP Foundation in cooperation with the Gerontological Society of America, Give an Hour, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and UnitedHealth Group.

AARP was founded in 1958 and has over 38 million members. It is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization for people over the age of 50. AARP is well-known for its advocacy efforts, providing its members with important information, products and services that enhance quality of life as they age. They also promote community service and keep members and the public informed on issues relating to the over 50 age group.

Article Source

AARP

Source URL

<https://connect2affect.org>

Last Reviewed

Tuesday, January 2, 2024