

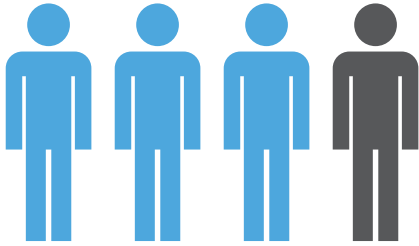


Social Isolation Toolkit

Geisinger

Social Isolation Toolkit

Congratulations! By reading through Geisinger's Social Isolation Toolkit, you're taking the first steps toward understanding and combating social isolation with community resources and social isolation education. This toolkit was developed to help you find local resources and get connected to support in addressing social isolation.



1 in 4 adults age 65 or older are socially isolated

Included in the toolkit

- ✓ Defining social isolation
- ✓ Identifying the differences between social isolation vs. loneliness
- ✓ Tools and resources for combating social isolation
- ✓ Community and member resources

Social isolation is the lack of regular social interaction. A person can feel isolation for many reasons, including lack of transportation, physical limitations, limited access to the internet or not being closely connected to family or friends. Geisinger Health Plan is happy to support combating social isolations by offering resources such as Neighborly (neighborlypa.com) and the attached Social Isolation Toolkit.



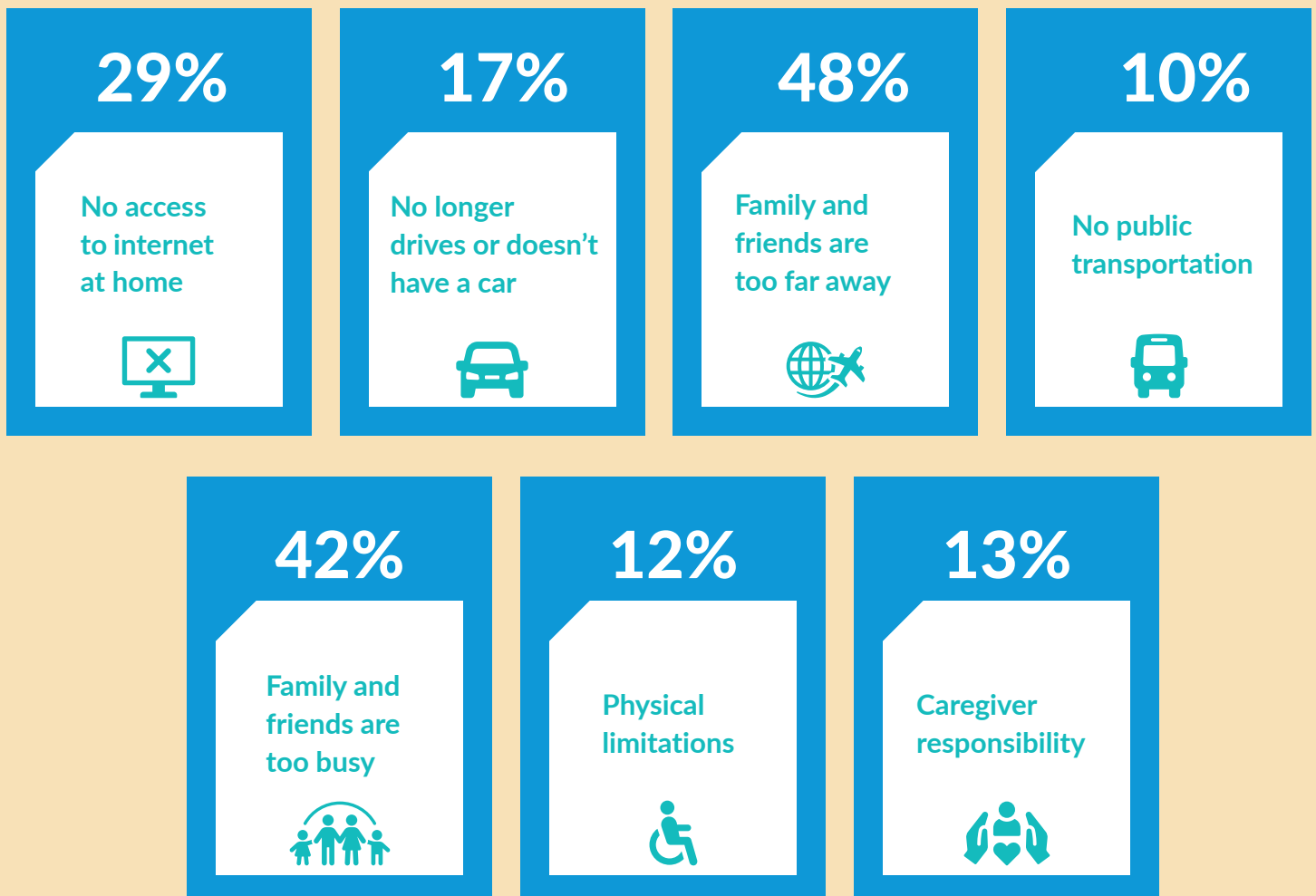
What is social isolation?

- Social isolation is the lack of social contacts.
- Social isolation can impact anyone, no matter your age.
- Social isolation can make having regular communication with friends or family difficult.
- Certain factors that may increase a person's risk of social isolation might include:
 - Inability to leave home without help
 - Feeling a lack of purpose
 - Lack of transportation
 - Living alone
 - Separation from family or friends
 - A major life change
 - Lack of social support
 - Caring for a loved one
 - Language barriers

Who is at risk of social isolation?

"Why do I feel isolated?"

A survey reveals responses to what's keeping people from staying connected.



Who is also at risk of social isolation?

- Do you feel lonely or socially isolated? Over $\frac{1}{3}$ of adults reported feeling lonely and/or socially isolated.
- Social isolation can affect any person.
- Some examples of populations that are more at risk include: older adults, caretakers, people with a poor family relation, people who live alone and can't leave their homes, people without stable housing, immigrants and LGBTQ+ individuals.

How common is the lack of social connection?

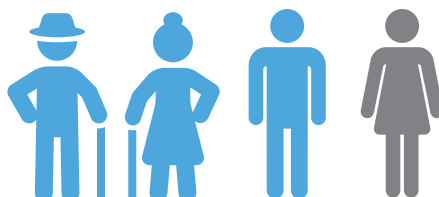
Feeling lonely

About 1 in 3 adults in the U.S.



Lack of social and emotional support

About 1 in 4 adults in the U.S.



Source: [Health Effects of Social Isolation and Loneliness](#) | [Social Connection](#) | CDC

Loneliness and social isolation

- Loneliness and social isolation are often used interchangeably and go hand in hand. However, loneliness and social isolation can differ.

Loneliness

Subjective feeling
Influenced by mood and situations

Social isolation

Measurable objective state
Few social relationships
Infrequent social contact



Health effects of social isolation

- Substantial evidence shows that social isolation and loneliness are strongly associated with a greater incidence of major psychological, cognitive, and physical morbidities and lower perceived well-being or quality of life.

The hurt of loneliness and social isolation | Nature Mental Health

Premature death risk factors

Social isolation can be more of a risk factor than smoking, physical inactivity and obesity (comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day).

Health risks associated with social isolation

- 50% increased risk of dementia
- 29% increased risk of heart disease
- 32% increased risk of stroke
- Higher rates of depression, anxiety and suicide
- Increased substance use
- Increased risk of ER visits and rehospitalization



How to combat social isolation

Self-care

- Build a routine
- Consider physical activities such as taking a walk or chair yoga
- Take a class on something you would enjoy (e.g., gardening, knitting)
- Find an activity or hobby that you enjoy

Stay connected

- Volunteer in the community
- Visit a public library or community center
- Reach out to friends and family
- Introduce yourself to neighbors or community members

Source: [Loneliness and Social Isolation – Tips for Staying Connected](#) | National Institute on Aging

Geisinger social isolation: community and member resources

Geisinger provider support

Remember, you are not alone. If you are feeling isolated or lonely a lot of the time, speak to your healthcare provider or talk to a care team member at Geisinger Health Plan to get help finding a provider.

Locate a provider near you: [Find a doctor, drug or location](#) | Geisinger Health Plan



Neighborly: Community resource

Do you need help finding community resources to help with social isolation? The Neighborly platform offers resources based on zip codes to help find a connection within the community.

For community resources on social isolation, visit neighborlypa.com to locate community centers, food assistance programs, transportation needs and much more. By entering your zip code, you can find programs to assist with social isolation. These programs assist members, community members residing in PA, and caregivers. Learn more at neighborlypa.com or by scanning the QR code.

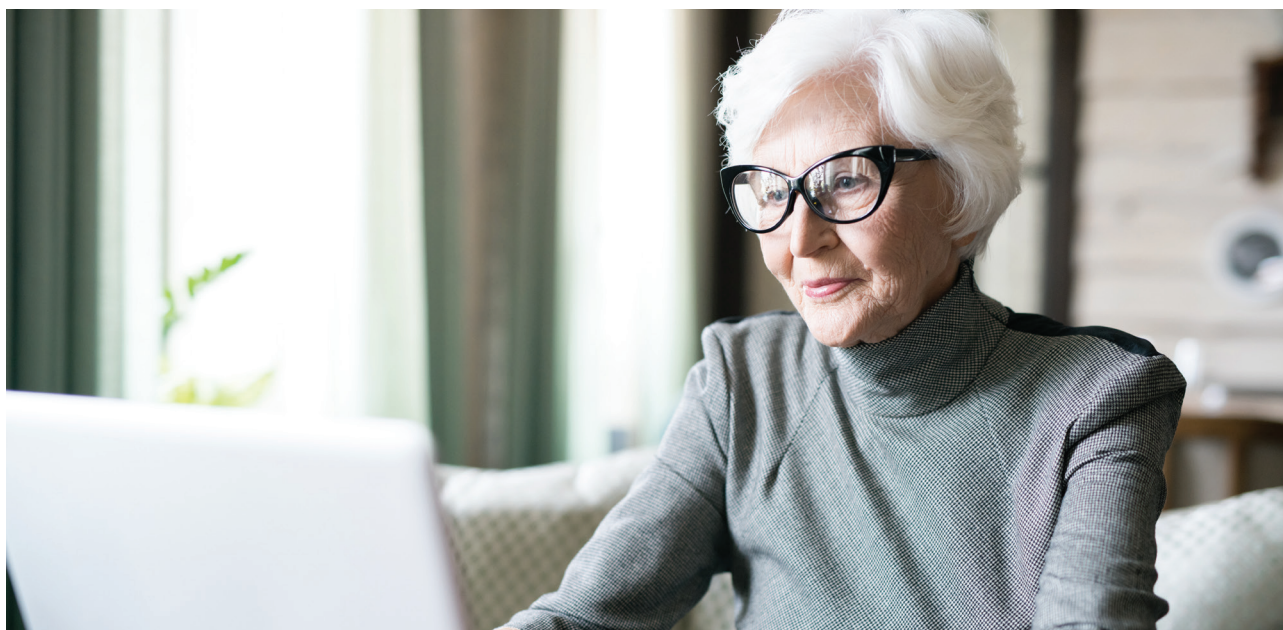
neighborlypa.com



Wellness online: Member resources

Our well-being resource center serves as your online source for health and medical information, making it easier to manage your health. You'll find educational resources, tools to change behaviors and a wellness assessment tool. Social interaction and feeling connected with others are just as important as maintaining a healthy diet and exercise. The Stay Connected tool lets you set a plan to take part in social activities that interest you and learn how to combat loneliness and live a happier life.

Geisinger member wellness resources: [5 Benefits of Health and Wellness Programs](#) | [Geisinger](#)



Geisinger events page: Community resources

Our goal, at Geisinger, is to make better health easier for everyone. That's why we host classes, events, screenings and support groups year-round to educate and inspire you along your health journey. From virtual to in-person events throughout central and northeastern Pennsylvania, we have options for you. Check out our Event Calendar, which is updated regularly, so be sure to check back often for new classes and events.

[Event Calendar](#) → [Geisinger](#) → [Events](#)

Additional online community and member resources

- [Health Effects of Social Isolation and Loneliness | Social Connection | CDC](#)
- [Overcoming Social Isolation - Help for Older Adults](#)
- [Aging Our Way, PA | Department of Aging | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)
- [Department of Aging in Pennsylvania - The County Office](#) (Locate a PA Aging Office)
- [How Right Now | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- [Let's Plant the Seeds of Change | hhs.gov](#)
- [Life Experienced: Find local activities for older adults](#)

