

ARE YOU FEELING LONELY?

We're here to help.

Most people feel lonely at some point in their lives. And, they probably don't think it's a big deal. However, health care providers¹ and researchers have found that loneliness is a growing public health² problem, one that can impact both physical and mental well-being.

In summer 2019, Cigna surveyed 10,441 adults to understand the impact of loneliness in the United States. Cigna's U.S. Loneliness Index³ showed that:

- › 61% of Americans reported sometimes or always feeling alone.
- › Half of Americans rarely or never feels as though there are people who understand them.
- › Adults age 18-22 are the loneliest generation and claim to be in worse health than people older than them.
- › Men are lonelier than women.
- › Americans living in urban areas are lonelier than those living in rural areas.

People with chronic and other serious conditions such as depression,⁴ heart disease,⁵ cancer⁶ and diabetes⁷ have something in common - they also suffer from loneliness. Research⁸ also shows that loneliness has the same impact on death rates as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Everyone feels lonely sometimes. If you're not feeling lonely, you probably know someone who is.

Connecting with others in person can help. Here are a few ideas on how to make it happen.

- 1.** Call a friend or family member to say hi, set up a time to go to lunch or drop by for a visit.
- 2.** Next time you walk through the office or go to the gym or coffee shop, stop and talk to others. Also try to have in-person meetings instead of by phone.
- 3.** Sign up for a group exercise class, to break a sweat and meet new people.
- 4.** Get the right amount of sleep each night. Try not to use technology right before bedtime, and set an alarm to avoid oversleeping.
- 5.** Get involved in your community. VolunteerMatch (www.volunteermatch.org), Create the Good[®] (www.createthegood.org) and United Way[®] (www.unitedway.org) can match you with volunteer opportunities based on your interests.

Together, all the way.[®]



Offered by: Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Connecticut General Life Insurance Company or their affiliates.

935465 01/20

Help is available.

Your health plan may also have programs to help you manage feelings of loneliness, stress or just feeling down.

- ▶ Check out your health plan's website, call the phone number on your insurance card or ask your HR representative about the benefits included in your plan. Some common types of benefits could include annual preventive screenings, an employee assistance program to help with life's stresses or mental health benefits to help get you on a path to feeling better.
 - Looking for tips and ideas? Check out the Health & Wellness corner for individuals and families at **Cigna.com**.
- ▶ When you're in the doctor's office, don't be afraid to share how you're feeling physically and mentally. As an example, start by saying that you have been feeling lonely or sad and want to know what you can do about it.
- ▶ Don't be embarrassed to talk to your friends. Ask a friend if they've ever spoken with a counselor or doctor about how they're feeling, and if they have a recommendation on who to talk to.
- ▶ Talking to people in similar situations can be helpful. Daily Strength (www.dailystrength.org/groups) connects people to online support groups. Mental Health America (www.mentalhealthamerica.net/find-support-groups) can help you locate support groups in your area.



You are not alone.

While loneliness is not a diagnosable medical condition, when you're feeling lonely, you can get help. You can visit **Cigna.com/CombatingLoneliness** to take a brief survey to see how feelings of loneliness may be impacting you. After you take the survey, we encourage you to talk to your doctor about how you are feeling – both mentally and physically – at your next visit.

Combat the feelings of loneliness and improve your whole body health with resources from Cigna. Visit Cigna.com/CombatingLoneliness.



1. Loneliness in the Workplace Can Be a High Cost For Employers, American Psychiatric Association (APA) Center for Workplace Mental Health, 2018; <http://workplacementalhealth.org/News-Events/Blog/January-2018/Loneliness-in-the-Workplace-Can-Be-a-High-Cost>.
2. Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for mortality: a meta-analytic review, Perspectives on Psychological Science, 2015; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25910392>.
3. Cigna's U.S. Loneliness Index, 2019; <https://www.cigna.com/about-us/newsroom/studies-and-reports/combating-loneliness/>.
4. Unraveling the Role of Loneliness in Depression: The Relationship Between Daily Life Experience and Behavior, Interpersonal and Biological Processes, 2017; <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00332747.2016.1256143>.
5. Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for coronary heart disease and stroke: systematic review and meta-analysis of longitudinal observational studies, BMJ Journals Heart, 2016; <http://heart.bmj.com/content/102/13/1009.info>.
6. Myeloid differentiation architecture of leukocyte transcriptome dynamics in perceived social isolation, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, 2015; <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2015/11/18/1514249112>.
7. Socially isolated individuals are more prone to have newly diagnosed and prevalent type 2 diabetes mellitus – the Maastricht study, BMC Public Health, 2017; <https://bmcpubhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-017-4948-6>.
8. Testimony before the US Senate Aging Committee, Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Ph.D., 2017; https://www.aging.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/SCA_Holt_04_27_17.pdf.

All information will be kept confidential by Cigna, and used strictly for research purposes. Your responses will NOT be used for any sales purposes, nor will your responses be used in any coverage or claim payment decisions.

We will use any information you provide strictly in accordance with our privacy policies. Cigna's privacy policy can be found here: <http://www.cigna.com/privacy>.

The information provided is for educational purposes only. It is not medical advice and is not a substitute for proper medical care provided by a doctor. Cigna assumes no responsibility for any circumstances arising out of the use, misuse, interpretation or application of the information provided. Individuals are encouraged to consult with their doctor for appropriate examinations, treatment, testing and care recommendations, including before undertaking a new diet or exercise program.

All Cigna products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Behavioral Health, Inc., and HMO or service company subsidiaries of Cigna Health Corporation. The Cigna name, logo, and other Cigna marks are owned by Cigna Intellectual Property, Inc.