

How to identify if someone is lonely



Loneliness is a national health epidemic, and its impact has only worsened since the COVID-19 pandemic. It is far more than just a bad feeling – it harms both individual and societal health, affecting people of all ages and backgrounds.

Who's at risk?

Loneliness can affect anyone—but certain life experiences and challenges can make some people more vulnerable.

- Chronic health issues or long-term disabilities
- Mental health challenges such as depression or anxiety
- Marginalization or discrimination
- Limited access to resources, specifically for those in rural areas, without transportation, or facing language barriers
- Major life changes such as divorce, job loss, or loss of a loved one
- Financial insecurity
- Violence or abuse

Certain groups also face a higher risk of loneliness due to social, economic or cultural factors:

- Young adults
- Older adults, particularly those living alone or with health issues
- Immigrants adjusting to a new culture
- People who identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual who may face a lack of acceptance

What are the signs and symptoms?

Loneliness looks different for everyone. It's important to recognize the signs and symptoms across all age groups, and forge relationships outside of your usual circle.

- Spending increasingly more time alone
- Excessive social media use
- Attention-seeking behavior
- Apathy
- Disengagement or social withdrawal
- Neglect of self-care
- Changes in appetite or sleeping patterns.

Whether you are physically alone or surrounded by people, watch for the following behavior in yourself:

- Withdrawal from social activities
- Feeling disconnected from others
- Experiencing feelings of emptiness
- Lack of motivation
- Feeling drained after social interactions
- Avoiding activities that once brought joy

Recognizing these signs is the first step in addressing loneliness. Whether it's reaching out to someone in your community or offering support to a loved one, small actions can make a big difference in fostering connection and improving well-being for everyone.

Join us in the Better Together campaign to fight loneliness and create stronger, more connected communities.

Learn more at:
ibx.com/bettertogether

Resources:

Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation, U.S. Surgeon General (<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/social-connectedness/risk-factors/index.html#:~:text=Loneliness%20is%20feeling%20alone%20or%20a%20sense%20of%20belonging.>)
NHS, Every Mind Matters (<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/life-challenges/loneliness/>)

Independence Blue Cross offers products through its subsidiaries Independence Assurance Company, Independence Hospital Indemnity Plan, Keystone Health Plan East, and QCC Insurance Company — independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Independence 

IBX