

Social Isolation During COVID-19

Social isolation means the lack of contact or meaningful social relationships, leaving an individual feeling isolated or alone. Recommendations for social distancing related to Covid-19 are causing further isolation for at-risk people.

What's at risk?

We know that social isolation increases the likelihood of depression and anxiety as well as other negative health outcomes. People experiencing social isolation are also more likely to let health conditions go untreated.

We also know older and vulnerable adults who experience social isolation are also at a higher risk for physical abuse and financial exploitation (including stranger scams).

What can we do to reduce our risk of social isolation?

Learn new technology to keep ourselves connected and safe

Facetime, Zoom, Skype, Facebook and more allow us to talk to and even see our friends and family to stay connected. If you have concerns about getting set up, ask a family member, neighbor, friend or staff person for help getting connected. Don't worry! Getting set up won't be too difficult and the results keep us together.

Reach out to family and friends

Use the technology above, use the phone or write letters to keep in contact with your loved ones during this time. Make sure your family, friends or network know how to best reach you.

What can we do to reduce the risk for members of our communities?

We can reach out using technology, the phone or writing our loved ones. We can even write to residents we don't know in long-term care who aren't allowed visitors at this time. Locate a residential facility in your community and send cards and letters to be distributed. Bonus idea: reach out to the youth in your network and have them draw pictures to send!

Need help?

If you are experiencing social isolation or need to talk to someone, please reach out to the Minnesota Elder Justice Center advocates at 651-440-9305, or visit www.elderjusticemn.org for more resources.