



Healthy Living Series

SOCIAL CONNECTION

“Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation has been an underappreciated public health crisis that has harmed individual and societal health. Our relationships are a source of healing and well-being hiding in plain sight – one that can help us live healthier, more fulfilled, and more productive lives.”

-Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General

The Power of Social Connection

- Good for your overall social, emotional, and physical well-being.
- Decreases the risk of developing/worsening heart disease, anxiety, high blood pressure, dementia, depression, diabetes, and stress.
- Increases self-esteem, empathy, and overall contentment.
- Improves your immune system & quality of sleep.



How to Get & Stay Connected



Nurture your existing relationships with family, friends, and colleagues.

- Call/text someone to let them know you were thinking about them.
- Schedule regular lunch dates or walking meetings.
- Be kind, responsive, and supportive of others, and practice gratitude.

Build new connections with people of various backgrounds and experiences.

- Participate or volunteer in group classes and events (like Walk with a Doc!)
- Join fitness, religious, hobby, professional, and community service organizations.
- Search for opportunities on Meetup, Eventbrite, or volunteermatch.org

Reduce habits that lead to feelings of disconnection.

- Examples: excessive social media use, spending time in unhealthy relationships.

Seek help during times of struggle by reaching out to a family member, friend, counselor, health care provider, or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

www.walkwithadoc.org

<https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/connection/index.html>
<https://www.nih.gov/health-information/social-wellness-toolkit>