



Social Connectedness

Social connectedness is created by the amount and quality of our relationships. Relationships with family, friends, coworkers, and community members can have a major impact on our health and well-being.

What does social connectedness look like?

- **Meaningful** and regular social exchanges.
- **Sense of support** from friends, family, and others in the community. **Sense of belonging.**
- **Feeling loved**, cared for, valued, and appreciated.
- Having **more than one person** to turn to for support.
- **Access** to safe public areas.

Why are social connections so important?

- They may reduce your risk of or prevent heart disease, stroke, dementia, depression, and anxiety.
- Having social connections may help to:
 - Improve your resiliency.
 - Recover from anxiety and depression.
 - Promote a healthy lifestyle.
 - Improve your overall well-being and quality of life.



Sources:
cdc.gov. How Does Social Connectedness Affect Health?. <https://www.cdc.gov/emotional-wellbeing/social-connectedness/affect-health.htm>. Accessed 06/27/2023.

Five Ways to Improve Social Connections

- 1 Establish and maintain social connections.**

Devote time and attention to developing and maintaining relationships. Expand your social network by making a new friend, volunteering, or starting a new hobby.
- 2 Consider the support you give, receive, and have available to you.**

Reach out to sources of support when you need to and provide support to others. Always remember to take care of yourself even if you are caring for others.
- 3 Strengthen the quality of social connections.**

Focus on building high-quality, strong, and meaningful connections. Take steps to address conflict or negative feelings and find ways to show support and gratitude.
- 4 Address barriers to social connection.**

Be mindful with technology. Don't let it distract you from engaging with people or make you feel worse about yourself or others.
- 5 Talk with a healthcare provider about concerns like stress, loneliness, and social isolation.**

Life changes like new health issues, divorce, or loss of a loved one can lead to disconnection. Be open and honest with your healthcare provider.

This information does not provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. It should not be used as a substitute for health care from a licensed healthcare professional. Consult with your healthcare provider for individualized treatment or before beginning any new program.

Sources:
cdc.gov. Ways to Improve Social Connectedness. <https://www.cdc.gov/emotional-wellbeing/social-connectedness/ways-to-improve.htm>. Accessed 06/27/2023.

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