Social isolation can have a significant impact on your patients’ overall well-being, especially for your elderly patients. On the flip side, increased social support can positively influence health outcomes – both behaviorally and psychologically – by helping people stick to healthier diets, reduce emotional stress and more.¹

**Did you know?**

3 out of 5 Americans consider themselves lonely²

Social isolation and loneliness lead to higher risks for:³
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Obesity
- Weakened immune system
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Cognitive decline
- Alzheimer’s disease
- Death

Medicare spends an additional $134 on socially isolated individuals⁴

Lonely people are 27% more likely to use skilled nursing facilities, and their monthly costs are $75 higher⁴

Loneliness can also increase care utilization⁵

- 68% higher hospitalization
- 57% higher ER visits
Five things you can do to help

1. **Start the conversation**
   Create space for patients to talk about their loneliness by asking validated questions. Many tools exist to help guide conversations with patients and assess how they are feeling.

2. **Encourage connections**
   Share the 24/7 Institute on Aging’s Friendship Line for people 60+ experiencing mental health challenges or loneliness: 800-971-0016. You can also suggest prayer lines or pen pal programs.

3. **Know the local resources**
   Provide patients a list of contact information for adult day cares, specific support groups or volunteer opportunities (like foster grandparent programs) in your area.

4. **Assure them they’re not alone**
   Remind patients they can call 211 to connect with human service agencies and community organizations that can best help those in need of assistance.

5. **Identify those at risk**
   If a patient seems to need more urgent help, share the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline for people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis who need support: 800-273-8255.

For more resources, visit CareAllies.com.

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