

Chapter 1 Social Connection



Let's connect!

Older adults face greater risk of social isolation which can lead to loneliness. Studies have shown that loneliness and isolation significantly increase the risk of stroke, heart disease, dementia, and mental health concerns. There are many high-tech (and even non-tech!) ways to keep in touch and maintain your social life.

This chapter is just a gentle reminder about some ways to stay connected even when it is difficult.



Social Connection



Activities to Keep you Socially Connected

- Walk around your neighbourhood; this can be a great physical and social activity. If it is safe, go for a walk with a friendly neighbour.
- Organize an outdoor get-together on a nice sunny day with a few people.
- Talk with family or friends over the phone. Reminisce about old memories and share new ones.
- Take part in an online fitness routine - live streamed or from one of the thousands of fitness YouTube videos.
- Read the Guide “Welcome to the online world” for some advice on how to get started with social media. Communication with others through email, texts, and social platforms such as Facebook, FaceTime, and Zoom, can keep you in touch with friends and family.

Once you get comfortable with a video platform such as FaceTime or Zoom

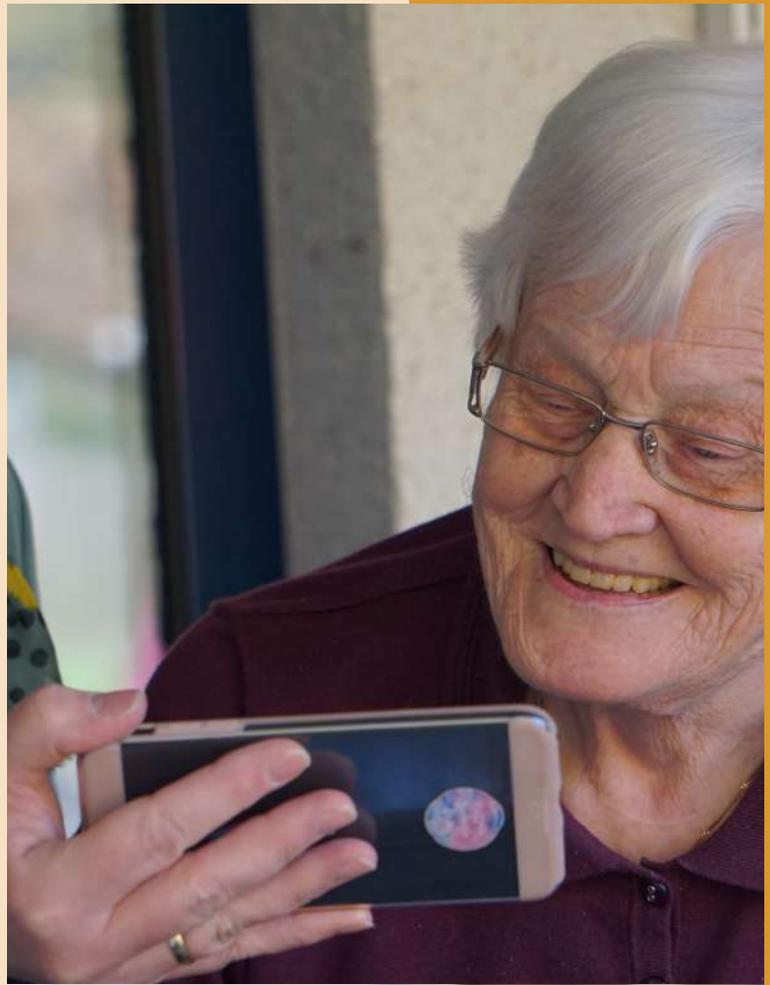
- Host a virtual get-together with friends via a group video chat.
 - Read a book to a grandchild or friend while video chatting with him/her.
 - Play cards online with friends (see chapter 4).
 - Eat a meal while you are video chatting with your friends.
- Join a club, a group of your interest online or in person (for example, a book club, a [knitting club](#) or another club). To find a virtual club, 1) open a browser like Google chrome, type key words like 'virtual reading club' or 'online reading club', 2) search on [meetup](#). On this website, you might have register, indicate your goal, the activities you like or you might be able to search directly. Another option is to 3) search a club on [Facebook](#). 4) ask public library.



- Become a volunteer online or in person. To be a volunteer can have numerous benefits to you ([read the resources on this page](#)).
 - “Put free time to good use
 - Meet new people
 - Cultivate personal growth
 - Gain new experience
 - Take on new challenges
 - Get new perspective on your own problems
 - Feel good and build self-esteem
 - Take pride in sharing your knowledge and abilities
 - Keep your body and mind active
 - Stay healthy and have fun!”

Interested? [Read this brochure](#), it gives good advice. You can volunteer from home, online or in person. Visit [volunteer.ca](#), search an organization you like on internet, in local newspapers or radio stations.

- Have a talent or a skill? You could teach others your skills by holding a virtual class! You could teach live by using zoom for instance or you can record videos with a phone, a tablet or a computer and post them online (you might need help to do those steps).





- Loneliness can be as dangerous to your health as smoking or abusing alcohol. If you know someone who might be lonely, why not call them?

General Tips to Prevent Loneliness

- Staying connected with others. If face to face is not possible, learn how to use social media or video chat (Zoom, Facetime, or others).
- Writing letters: whether the old fashioned kind or using electronic means (email, messenger, etc...)
- Planning a schedule of activities, tasks, etc.
- Giving back to others brings happiness, whether you just find a way to help the people around you or you make it more official.



Josée's mother knit newborn hats and blankets and donate them to hospitals. She is so proud of what she has done. Volunteering gives her a greater sense of satisfaction and growth. It feels good to help others.