

Get Connected (continued. . .)

Get Outdoors

Going outdoors can be anything from walking anywhere with safe, maintained sidewalks to trails and hiking to more physical activity.

Looking to serve your community by volunteering and get outdoors? Watch the schedule on the [Wildlands Restoration Volunteers](#) website to book a date and time to give back. They have projects across Colorado during Spring, Summer, and Fall.

Caring Outreach Caller

Volunteer as little or as much time as you have. Call patients to connect and share a friendly, caring voice. This program makes an impact on both the volunteer calling and the person receiving the call! Volunteers use phones at WMC or a remote phone connected to WMC. If you have questions or would like to volunteer as an Outreach Caller, please email pac@westminstermedicalclinic.com.

Kid's Card Club

Calling all 5-11 year olds who are patients at WMC! Join Kid's Club and make homemade cards for patients at WMC who may need a smile, to know someone is thinking of them during recovery, congratulations to a new baby/sibling, or a heartfelt note because of a recent loss of someone loved.

Do you know someone in need of a homemade card? If this someone is a patient at Westminster Medical Clinic, [order a card on our website](#) to bring a smile, share sympathy of loss, show appreciation or send congratulations!

Being human is a process, an action, a verb. Connect.



Questions for Your Medical Provider

- ✓ *How do I know if I am lonely?*
- ✓ *How can I feel less lonely?*
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

Arts: Film Festival

[Project UnLonely](#) featured its 5th Film Festival, in which a collection of 40 short animated, narrative, and documentary films bring diverse perspective of loneliness. You are invited to watch, share, and discuss the films with others as a step towards connecting with others.



LONELINESS



Talk to your medical provider today to get more information on this health topic.

* 303-428-7449 *
www.westminstermedicalclinic.com

What Is Loneliness?

Loneliness isn't about being alone, but rather about *not feeling* connected. People can feel lonely even when among family and friends. Loneliness can be the perceived absence of someone significant to you, not having quality-fulfilling friendships and family relationships, or the absence of an active network or community.

What Does the Research Say?

The most current information suggests up to 1 in 3 adults and 1 in 5 school-aged children are effected by loneliness. Older adults with two or more chronic conditions or unmet social needs and younger people experience higher rates of loneliness. About 2 in 5 older adults in the United Kingdom say the television is their main company. In health, loneliness shows a similar impact as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. More of health and wellbeing is associated with social-emotional-behavioral health than physical health. Loneliness and depression share some characteristics, but are not the same. Not everyone with loneliness has depression. Loneliness can be associated with a number of medical conditions including -

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Cardiovascular disease and stroke
- Cognitive decline and Alzheimer's
- Depression, Anxiety, Suicidality
- Insomnia
- Falling

Do You Feel Lonely?

How often do you feel . . .

1. You lack companionship?
2. Left out?
3. Isolated from others?

If you answered "sometimes" or "often" to any of the questions above, your medical provider is ready to talk with you more.

Would you like to take the in-depth assessment? Try PARTNERme. The assessment is available online in the comfort of your own home or can be done at Westminster Medical Clinic.

Email Katie, Family Care Program Manager, at katie.effertz@westminstermedicalclinic.com to ask for the assessment. Katie will also schedule a visit with your Provider to review the results.



Westminster Medical Clinic anonymously surveyed people before and since the COVID-19 Pandemic. WMC found 1 in 5 adult patients at WMC are lonely, and *since* COVID-19, equal numbers of men and women are lonely.

Patients Say What Can Help!

There are various options that could help to feel more connected with self and others, and less lonely. In the same anonymous survey mentioned above, WMC patients were asked what could help, and they answered: talking to a therapist, connecting and petting animals, connecting with music, outdoor and learning activities, and volunteering in the community.

Get Connected, Become Less Lonely

Start Therapy

Research says Cognitive-Behavior Therapy (CBT) can be very helpful. CBT is available with one of our Behavioral Health Providers.

Ask your provider about getting scheduled or call us at 303-428-7449 to schedule an appointment.

Practice Mindfulness, Connect with Self

Research says mindfulness can be helpful. Journaling is a way to connect with oneself and practice mindfulness. Exercises can build up self-worth and improve connections with others.

Try this [Guided Journal on Amazon](#).

Ask your provider about HeartMath! HeartMath is an evidence-based way to help with stress, anxiety, and depression. There is a personal monitoring device that scientifically shows biologically what is happening in your body.

HeartMath is offered with the WMC Health and Wellness Coach. You will learn about your emotional and physical health, how to use the device, and learn techniques of what to do with the information to improve your health - emotionally, mentally, and physically!

To learn more, visit [HeartMath](#) online.



Connect with Animals

Connecting with animals can bring joy and an opportunity to express your feelings to something else, an animal. Practicing conversation with animals is also helpful as you interact with others.

For anyone looking for a [Companion Pet on Amazon](#), there is a dog or cat for **any age!** They are hypoallergenic, easy to take care of, and can be even a Companion for an older adult in cognitive decline.