



# Being alone, feeling lonely

There are many times when being alone as a man is both necessary and helpful. Being alone can give you time to deal with your private thoughts in peace, consider weighty decisions and think things through before taking action.

There are other times when being alone is not so helpful. When you find yourself alone because you can't get around much anymore, you don't feel well or your friends have moved away, being alone can lead to a sense of loneliness and sometimes depression.

Not socialising and feeling lonely at the same time is called social isolation. Although both men and women experience social isolation, men are often more vulnerable to it.

- Men are more likely to rely on work networks for social connections, which retirement can put an end to if new friendships are not established.
- Men tend to depend on themselves in times of strife which makes it difficult to ask for support when they feel lonely.
- Men tend to rely on their partner as their sole support and the one person with whom they share their thoughts and feelings. When this person is no longer available, either through death, disability or divorce, it may be difficult to re-establish this companionship with someone else.

## What can you do to help yourself?

- Make the most of public or private transport to get out and about.
- Get access to a computer and learn how to use it.
- Be willing to accept help.
- Have a positive attitude to life.
- Use any recreational/health promoting activities like a pool or a walking path.
- Find a pen pal.
- Use public space like parks, libraries and community centres.
- Ask where to find information for services in your area.
- Make a telephone friendship.
- Attend a group outing.
- Call the TOMNET Professional Support Team for a chat and talk to one of the blokes or ask for in-home visiting.

# Being alone, feeling Lonely

## The impact of being socially isolated

- If you can maintain healthy contact with others you are more likely to have good self esteem and better mental wellbeing than those who do not.
- Being with other people helps keep the mind alert and active. Discussions, playing cards, doing crosswords and having a laugh all help to stimulate the mind and give you something else to think about.
- Sometimes feeling lonely can result in other problems such as avoiding exercise, not eating regularly and not seeing a doctor.
- Having an illness often reduces your ability to get out and about so keeping good health is important.
- Being socially isolated is also a risk factor, in particular for older men aged over 75 who live alone and are receiving treatment for physical or mental health issues.

**You will have good and bad days but speaking to other men or a member of the TOMNET Professional Support Team is one step towards being heard and supported.**

## The TOMNET Centre

 (07) 4638 9080

223 Hume St Toowoomba QLD 4350  
PO BOX 7801 Toowoomba QLD 4350

Email: [tomnet05@tomnetinc.org.au](mailto:tomnet05@tomnetinc.org.au)

### Open:

Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Friday 9:00am - 3:00pm

FOR IMMEDIATE HELP, call:

**Lifeline 13 11 14**

-----  
**Talk to us. We understand.**  
-----

Supported by:



Australian Government  
Department of Health

