

March 29, 2021

Loneliness & Isolation: A Review

Gaps in social connections carry a risk factor that may exceed the risk of smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day, obesity, physical inactivity, and air pollution.

Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Layton JB. [Social relationships and mortality risk: a meta-analytic review](#). PLoS Med. 2010 Jul 27;7(7):e1000316. doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316. PMID: 20668659; PMCID: PMC2910600.

Loneliness can lead to mental illness such as depression and addictive behaviours.

Mushtaq,R.Shoib,S.Shah,T.Mushtaq,S.(2014). [Relationship Between Loneliness, Psychiatric Disorders and Physical Health ? A Review on the Psychological Aspects of Loneliness](#), 8(9), WE01-WE04.

An Ipsos poll reported that during the first month of the COVID-19 pandemic, 54 percent of Canadians responded that physical distancing left them feeling lonely or isolated.

[Ipsos, 2020](#)

Before COVID-19, 20-25 percent of the population experienced some form of isolation and loneliness.

[Angus Reid Institute, 2020](#)

In 2020, almost half (47%) of Canadians reported their mental health as only fair, poor or very poor—a significant increase compared to the 30% who rated themselves this way in 2019.

[Angus Reid Institute, 2020](#)

Recently, WSPS, in partnership with Howatt HR, produced an interim research report which looks at the relationship between perceived isolation, loneliness and resilience and their impact on the employee experience and productivity costs in the workplace. Preliminary results of the research show a strong correlation between loneliness and isolation and higher productivity costs.

[Exploring the relationships between perceived isolation, loneliness and resiliency](#). 2020