



Social connection

Healthy ageing

Staying connected to people in your family, friendship groups and community is good for your health and wellbeing.

When you connect with others, it can protect you from depression and anxiety and lower your risk of health conditions like cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. It can also protect your cognitive health and reduce your risk of dementia.

Practical ways to stay connected

As you get older it can be hard to maintain and build new relationships. But there are many things you can do to stay socially connected. For example, you can:

- walk your dog (or someone else's)
- pop in to see someone you know
- learn a new sport (e.g. golf, tennis, cycling, bowls)
- join walking or bushwalking groups
- enrol in a short course
- start a new hobby (e.g. singing, craft, gardening, art, yoga).

You can also:

- invite people over for regular catch-ups (e.g. card games)
- travel with a group
- visit your local community centre
- volunteer in your local community (e.g. homeless support, community visits, library book deliveries, Meals on Wheels, mentoring)
- join a local religious group.

If limited mobility stops you from staying socially connected, a mobility aid such as a walking frame or stick might help. Talk to your doctor or an occupational therapist or visit My Aged Care to find supports.

Tips to make new social connections

You can:

- introduce yourself to different people at social events
- keep going to regular activities, such as classes or catch-ups, so people get to know you
- be willing to talk about yourself – and listen to others
- swap contact information with people you like
- ask to catch up again if you liked meeting someone.

Find activities in your area

Find a local community group that has activities you like. For example, search online for:

- Clubs of Australia
- Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association (ANHCA)
- Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) – member page
- My Aged Care
- Village Hubs.

You can also search for:

- Adult Learning Australia
- U3A
- Rotary International
- Heart Foundation Walking
- Volunteering Australia.

For more information, resources and references, visit jeanhailes.org.au/health-a-z/healthy-ageing.



Phone 03 9453 8999
jeanhailes.org.au

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Disclaimer: This information does not replace medical advice. If you are worried about your health, talk to your doctor or healthcare team.

We write health information for people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and identities. We use the term 'women', but we acknowledge that this term is not inclusive of all people who may use our content.

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