

The Toll of a Solitary Life

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The New York Times:

Do you like being alone? New research from Brigham Young University shows just how bad loneliness and social isolation, even for people who prefer their own company, can be for health.

The researchers analyzed data collected from 70 studies and more than 3.4 million people from 1980 to 2014. The studies, which followed people for about seven years on average, showed that people who were socially isolated, lonely or living alone had about a 30 percent higher chance of dying during a given study period than those who had regular social contact. Notably, the effect was greater for younger people than for those over 65, according to the report in *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

Julianne Holt-Lunstad, the lead author, said the effect of loneliness and social isolation was as great a risk factor as obesity and should be taken seriously as a threat to public health.

Read the whole story: [*The New York Times*](#)