- Loneliness



Mind

SMART WAYS TO STAY SHARP, CALM AND POSITIVE

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LONELY HEARTS

After the US Surgeon General warned that loneliness has the same mortality impact as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, US researchers sought to understand exactly how being socially disconnected affects our health. They analysed blood samples from 42,000 adults aged 40 to 69 and identified several blood proteins associated with social isolation and loneliness. Many of these proteins are produced in response to inflammation and viral infection, and are linked to heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke and early death. The researchers concluded that interacting with loved ones protects our health by boosting our immune system and reducing our risk of chronic diseases. Time to schedule that coffee date with a mate!

WORDS: SABRINA ROGERS-ANDERSON. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK