

Relationships and Health

To live and participate in community life with others benefit one's health significantly. That is a finding reported in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

"Building on a dozen studies correlating friendship and fellowship with health, a study has found that people with a broad array of social ties are significantly less likely to catch colds than those with sparse social networks," reported the *New York Times News Service*.



"The incidence of infection among people who knew many different kinds of people was nearly half that among those who were relatively isolated," the researchers reported.

"The lack of diverse social contacts was the strongest of the risk factors for colds that were examined, including smoking, low vitamin C intake and stress."

Researchers have found similar health benefits from community for heart disease patients. In one study, Dr. Redford Williams, director of the Behavioral Medicine Research Center at Duke University Medical Center, found that "heart disease patients with few social ties are six times as likely to die within six months as those with many relatives, friends and acquaintances."

Reportedly, one of the main beneficiaries of a broadened network of relationships is our immune system. In another study, Dr. Janice Kiecolt-Glaser, director of health psychology at the Ohio State University College of Medicine, and her husband, Dr. Ronald Glaser, a virologist at Ohio State, have reported that "a person's immune response to vaccines increases with the strength of his or her social support."

As always, when God tells us how to live, those guidelines are for our own good. Involvement at work in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home with residents, families and other associates, as well as people in our churches and civic organizations, contributes to our health!

Remember that "love your neighbor" commandment?

– Beecher Hunter