

Unhealthy Coping Skills in Seniors: What to Watch For

More than [a third of older adults](#) report feeling alone, with a comparable number saying they lack social connection, according to a study by the Journal of the American Medical Association. This highlights a growing public health concern among seniors.

Greenville is home to the Swamp Rabbit Trail, a favorite spot for locals. It's a safe, scenic place where you can walk the trail with friends, helping you stay social.

Many seniors turn to **unhealthy coping skills** when life gets tough. These habits can go unnoticed and put you at risk. Families and caregivers in Greenville need to know what to look out for.

Noticing the signs early can make a huge difference. Keep reading to learn about unhealthy coping habits in seniors and how to create healthier ones.

Warning Signs of Poor Coping in Seniors

Seniors often hide emotional distress with behaviors that seem harmless. Noticing these signs early helps families prevent bigger problems and is a focus at [Terrabella Summit](#).

Neglecting Personal Care and Health

When you feel overwhelmed, you may neglect your own needs. Neglect often manifests as:

- Skipping showers
- Wearing dirty clothes
- Forgetting medications

Self-neglect often stems from feelings of hopelessness, confusion, or physical limitations. You may lose motivation to maintain your routines or feel unable to manage daily tasks.

Over time, neglect leads to serious health risks. They include infections, malnutrition, and worsening chronic conditions.

Social Withdrawal and Isolation

Isolation is one of the most common unhealthy coping skills. You may avoid friends, family, and activities. Seniors may also stop attending church, skip family dinners, or avoid phone calls.

Social withdrawal has serious cognitive effects. A study in the National Library of Medicine found that isolated seniors have a high risk of dementia. Their risk is 50% greater than those who are not isolated.

Aging and behavior changes often make social situations hard for seniors. Even those who once enjoyed them may find them overwhelming. Dealing with grief, health problems, or depression makes keeping up with relationships feel hard.

Substance Use as an Escape

Stress responses in older adults often include reaching for a drink when anxious. Prescription drugs also become easy targets. That's because they're already in the medicine cabinet and seem harmless.

An estimated 1.9 million adults aged 65 and older reported heavy alcohol use. The data comes from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Struggling seniors may use alcohol to manage emotional distress or pain. They may also take extra pills to sleep better or feel numb.

Both behaviors create dangerous cycles that worsen the original problems. Alcohol interferes with sleep quality. ***Medication misuse leads to harmful drug interactions and increased dependency.***

Overeating or Loss of Appetite

Food-related **unhealthy coping skills** are common but often overlooked. You may eat too much when stressed, while someone else will lose interest in food completely. Both patterns have serious consequences for your health and well-being.

Overeating is often triggered by emotional distress. It leads to weight gain, high blood pressure, and an increased risk of diabetes. Not eating enough leads to poor nutrition,

weak muscles, and a weak immune system.

Maintaining proper nutrition is a key part of healthy aging habits. It promotes physical strength and mental sharpness.

Building Better Emotional Habits for Seniors

Building healthy coping habits in place of harmful ones requires time and support. The good news is that you can learn new ways to handle stress and emotions at any age.

Staying Physically Active

Exercise is one of the best ways to improve senior emotional wellness. ***Regular physical activity reduces depression symptoms.*** Walking, swimming, or gentle yoga all help manage stress and boost mood.

TerraBella Summit offers expert-led wellness classes designed for seniors. Residents also join fitness sessions or take peaceful walks in the community garden. Such activities offer positive ways to manage stress.

Engage in Intellectual Activities

Keeping your mind active is essential for emotional and cognitive health. Engage in mentally stimulating activities like:

- Reading
- Solving puzzles
- Learning something new
- Participating in intellectual discussions

Regular mental stimulation reduces the risk of dementia by strengthening brain connections. Residents at our Greenville, SC, assisted living community enjoy a fully equipped library. It offers a quiet space to explore materials that encourage intellectual engagement.

If you're already [experiencing memory-related challenges](#), mental stimulation remains important. However, additional support may be needed.

TerraBella Summit provides specialized memory care services in Greenville, SC services. Our programs help residents with dementia and Alzheimer's live a fulfilling and

meaningful life.

Building Social Connections

Strong relationships protect against unhealthy coping strategies. ***Social seniors are less likely to develop depression or anxiety.*** At TerraBella Summit, we offer [assisted living in Greenville, SC](#), focused on social connection.

Our residents enjoy live music events and group games. Such events create natural opportunities for friendship. We also have regular outings to Greenville shops, restaurants, and seasonal events.

The outings keep residents connected to the community. Consistent social interaction gives seniors something to look forward to and eases loneliness.

Join a Senior Living Community

An independent living Greenville, SC community lets you enjoy a supportive environment. It also promotes independence.

Senior living communities provide tailored care and engaging activities. They help seniors live their best lives.

A major advantage of assisted living is having access to personal care support. At TerraBella Summit, we provide services tailored to your needs, including:

- Showering and bathing assistance
- Personal grooming and dressing support
- Medication management
- Dining assistance
- Laundry and housekeeping services

Memory care is a primary focus for residents facing cognitive challenges. Our staff is trained in memory care and mental health awareness. By choosing senior living in Greenville, you can enjoy the care and attention you deserve.

Addressing Unhealthy Coping Skills in Seniors

Seniors often turn to **unhealthy coping skills** like isolation, neglecting self-care, or poor eating habits. Destructive patterns can go unnoticed but have serious effects on health

and happiness. Early recognition and support help replace these habits with positive routines, leading to better emotional and physical well-being.

At TerraBella Summit, residents enjoy daily-prepared meals, engaging activities, and personal care in a welcoming community. ***Our team is available around the clock, so you can focus on living fully without the burden of chores.*** [Schedule a tour](#) to see how we support seniors in building healthier habits.