

Adult Substance Use Disorder

Substance use disorder is a treatable brain disease if an individual is willing to seek help. Addiction is a complex, chronic disease that affects both the body and mind. Substance use disorders can be influenced by genetic and biological factors, but can also be caused by an individual's environment, economic conditions, traumatic events or life stressors.

Know the Signs

There is a range in the severity of substance use problems from mild to moderate to severe. People who abuse drugs or alcohol can experience serious consequences such as accidents, overdoses, crime, school problems, violence and suicide. Someone with a substance use disorder might:

- Have problems at work or school (loss of productivity, low morale, theft)
- Have problems with their physical health
- Neglect their physical appearance
- Withdraw from normal, everyday life activities
- Have money trouble

Most Abused Substances

Those who have substance use disorders tend to be risk takers and have poor self-regulation and impulse control. The most commonly abused substances are alcohol, marijuana and opioids.

- **Alcohol**- a central nervous system depressant that negatively affects brain function, motor skills, and internal organs.
- **Marijuana**- a mind-altering drug that effects short-term memory and coordination. It also has significant long-term effects on brain function (learning and memory)
- **Opioids** - the number one type of prescription drug that people abuse. Often prescribed for pain relief, individuals take more than the recommended dose to get high.

How to Help

An individual admitting they have a substance abuse problem is the first step on their journey to recovery. Treatment requires hard work and determination, but people can recover from substance abuse disorders to live a life of sobriety. Treatment plans often consist of detoxification, counseling, medication and support services. Some plans will require an individual to complete residential treatment. New Vista offers 28-day residential programs at the Schwartz Center for Men and the Schwartz Center for Women in Lexington, and the Center for Women and Children in Richmond.

If you or a loved one is struggling with a substance use disorder, please call our 24-Hour Helpline at 1.800.928.8000 to explore treatment options. We can help.

Source – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration <https://www.samhsa.gov/disorders/substance-use>