

Substance misuse truth

Addiction is about more than drugs

Activity:

"I hide my credit card bills from my spouse."
"I work 14 hours a day."
"Just one more plastic surgery and my body will be perfect."



Object:

"I can't walk away from my favorite gambling website."
"I never put down my phone, not even when I sleep."

It can be about a lot of things

Substance:

"Sometimes, I take an extra pain pill even when I'm not hurting."
"I often drink 5 or 6 beers when I only want to drink 1."



Behavior:

"I have to exercise constantly to stay fit."
"I want sex 24/7."
"I always crave sugar."

Addiction is when that "thing" becomes the major focus of your life, and when it gets to the point that you don't do other things or it harms you or someone else physically, mentally or socially.¹

A bigger problem than you may realize

It can happen to anyone at any age:



1 in 7 Americans age 12 and older has a substance misuse problem.²



Less than 11% of people in need get treatment.³



9 out of 10 people who misuse or are addicted to drugs and alcohol began before age 18.³

What to look for

So how do you know? Pay attention when you or someone you care about:^{1,2,4,5}

- Becomes obsessed with an activity, substance, object or behavior.
- Seeks it out even when it causes physical problems, work or study issues, or conflict with friends and family.
- Does it over and over again or can't stop.
- Has withdrawal symptoms: jumpiness, trembling, sweating, nausea/vomiting, insomnia, depression, irritability, fatigue, loss of appetite or headaches.
- Doesn't feel in control of when, how long, or how much with the activity, substance, object or behavior.
- Hides it /denies a problem with it.
- Experiences a blackout doing it.
- Is depressed or has extreme mood swings.
- Neglects activities that were once really important.
- Has an extreme change in appearance, eating habits or energy.
- Takes serious or unnecessary health risks.
- Has a family history of addiction.
- Comes from a family that was mentally or physically abusive; has low self-esteem.

Addiction changes how your brain works

These brain changes can lead to harmful and self-destructive behaviors. And just like diabetes, heart disease or other chronic conditions, it needs continuing long-term care.⁶



Consider home life

Research suggests a higher risk for addiction and addictive behaviors if:⁴

- One or more of your parents had a drug, alcohol or other substance problem.
- You come from a family with a history of conflict, aggression, or other ongoing stressors.
- You have a parent with depression or mental health issues.

Help any time you need it

If you or someone you know could be misusing substances or has symptoms of addictive behavior, get help from a doctor or contact:

National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Helpline at
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

You can also contact your company's Employee Assistance Program or Human Resources department about helpful resources available to you.

1. Ruth C. Engs, RN, EdD. Professor, Applied Health Science. What are Addictive Behaviors? Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405, 1987, 2012.

2. Center on Addiction: What is Addiction; Prevalence of Addiction; What is the Difference Between Drug or Alcohol Use and Addiction? (rev. April 14, 2017). centeronaddiction.org.

3. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Findings from NSDUH reveal that only a subset of individuals receive services for substance use and mental health issues (September 21, 2017): samhsa.gov/newsroom/press-announcements/201709211000.

4. Recovery.org: Family History and Addiction Risk: What You Need to Know to Beat the Odds; Addiction Signs, Symptoms, Effects and Treatment (accessed April 19, 2018): recovery.org.

5. National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence: About Addiction: Signs and Symptoms (rev. December 19, 2016): nccadd.org.

6. National Institute on Drug Abuse: The Science of Drug Abuse and Addiction: The Basics (rev. October 2016): drugabuse.gov/publications/media-guide/science-drug-abuse-addiction-basics.

This information is meant to educate, not serve as medical advice. See your doctor for medical advice about your health.

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of: In Colorado: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc. Copies of Colorado network access plans are available on request from member services or can be obtained by going to anthem.com/co/networkaccess. In Connecticut: Anthem Health Plans, Inc. In Georgia: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia, Inc. In Indiana: Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. In Kentucky: Anthem Health Plans of Kentucky, Inc. In Maine: Anthem Health Plans of Maine, Inc. In Missouri (excluding 30 counties in the Kansas City area): RightCHOICE® Managed Care, Inc. (RIT), Healthy Alliance® Life Insurance Company (HALIC), and HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates administer non-HMO benefits underwritten by HALIC and HMO benefits underwritten by HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates only provide administrative services for self-funded plans and do not underwrite benefits. In Nevada: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc., dba HMO Nevada. In New Hampshire: Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc.; HMO plans are administered by Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc. and underwritten by Matthew Thornton Health Plan, Inc. In Ohio: Community Insurance Company. In Virginia: Anthem Health Plans of Virginia, Inc. trades as Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Virginia, and its service area is all of Virginia except for the City of Fairfax, the Town of Vienna, and the area east of State Route 123. In Wisconsin: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wisconsin (BCBSWI), underwrites or administers PPO and indemnity policies and underwrites the out of network benefits in POS policies offered by CompCare Health Services Insurance Corporation (CompCare) or Wisconsin Collaborative Insurance Corporation (WCIC). CompCare underwrites or administers HMO or POS policies; WCIC underwrites or administers Well Priority HMO or POS policies. Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.