

“Substance Abuse”

Substance abuse refers to a pattern of significant use of any substance or drug or medicine for mood-altering purposes. Substance or drug abuse is use of a drug in amounts or any methods which are harmful to the individual or others. It is an illness that affects an individual's brain and behavior and leads to an incapability to manage the use of a legal or illegal drug or medication.

Concept of Substance Abuse

A *drug* is any chemical substance which when consumed alters normal bodily functions and leads to cognitive, affective and behavioral changes. Examples of drugs include alcohol, tobacco etc.

Substance use refers to consumption of psychoactive substances without experiencing any negative consequences. He/she is doing it for social, experimental or recreational use.

Substance Misuse is a situation where a person experiences negative consequences on consuming substances.

Substance Abuse is a state where an individual continuously uses it with negative consequences such as physical, social or legal harm.

Harmful Use of substances refers to a pattern of drug use or consumption which is already causing damage to health.

Drug Dependence is a cluster of physiological, behavioral and cognitive phenomena in which the use of a substance takes on a higher priority for a person as compared to other behaviors.

Drug addiction is also known as substance use disorder. It is an illness that affects an individual's brain and behavior and leads to an incapability to manage the use of a drug or medication.

Harmful effects of Substance abuse

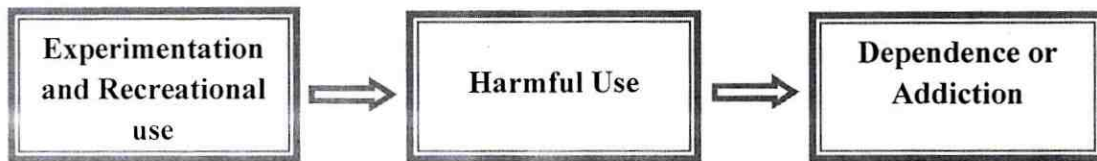
- Failure to meet responsibilities
- Health issues
- Disabilities
- Impaired control
- Social issues such as poor adjustment, bullying etc.
- Alteration in one's decision

- Distortion of insight
- Altering the reaction timing
- Danger of accident and damage

Some time people think that

- It is a voluntary behavior
- Person using it is weak and immoral
- Willpower is enough to stop drug abuse
- It can be stopped using at anytime
- Teens are too young to get addicted
- Person gets addicted to drugs only after using it for longer period of time
- Drug increases creativity
- It is a disease and there is nothing that can be done about it
- Single use of drugs won't let one addicted
- It helps to release one's stress

Progression of Substance abuse



Commonly used drugs and their consequences

- **Alcohol** leads to euphoria, mild stimulation, relaxation, lowered inhibitions, drowsiness, loss of coordination of senses etc.
- **Tobacco** leads to increased blood pressure and heart rate.
- **Cannabis** leads to euphoria, relaxation, slow reaction time, distorted sensory perception, impaired balance and coordination, anxiety, panic attacks etc.
- **Opioids** leads to pain relief, euphoria, drowsiness, sedation, weakness, dizziness, nausea, confusion, dry mouth, itching, sweating, constipation etc.
- **Inhalants** or **Solvents** leads to stimulation, loss of inhibition, headache, nausea, slurred speech, loss of motor coordination etc.
- **Cocaine** or **Amphetamine** leads to increased heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature, feelings of exhilaration, mental alertness, tremors, reduced appetite, irritability, anxiety, panic, violent behavior etc.
- **Sleep Medications** (benzodiazepines) leads to sedation, drowsiness, reduced anxiety, feelings of well being, lowered inhibitions, slurred speech, poor concentration, confusion, dizziness, impaired coordination and memory etc.

- **Heroin** (smack, brown sugar) leads to euphoria, drowsiness, impaired coordination, confusion, nausea, feeling of heaviness, arrested breathing etc.

Reasons of Substance Use/Abuse

Let us do brain storming about the reasons which are responsible for substance use/abuse. The expected answers will be...

- To rebel against parents or authorities
- As a recreational activity
- To express independence
- To handle low self-esteem
- To cope with academic stress
- To deal with family stress and issues
- For immediate gratification
- Due to peer pressure etc.

Risk factors of Substance Abuse. Following factors puts a person at risk of consuming substance.

- **Personality factors** -aggressive people are at a higher risk of using drugs.
- **Psychological factors** -high novelty seeking, curiosity, impulsivity, low harm avoidance, high reward sensitivity etc.
- **Familial factors** - lack of supervision, conflicts within the family, history of drug abuse in family etc.
- **Drug availability** - easy access to drugs through family or friends.
- **Peer group** - peer pressure and use of drugs among peer groups
- **Behavioral factors** - anxiety, depression, conduct problems (frequent lying, destroying school property etc.).
- **Lack of social support** - poor family support, unhelpful peer groups and community etc.
- **Abusive factors** - being a victim of physical, emotional or sexual abuse may increase the risk for drug use.
- **Social factors** - poor social skills and lack of coping skills.
- **Media influence** such as television, movies, web series etc. plays a major role in observational learning.

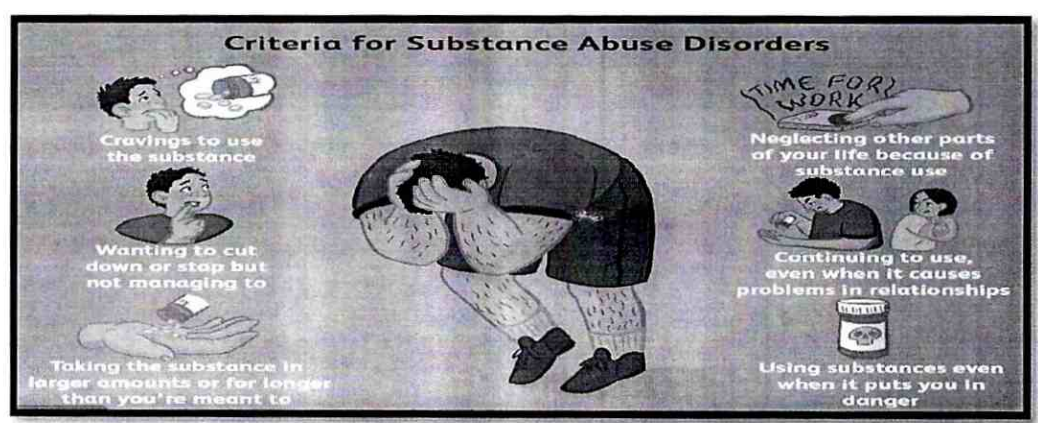
Symptoms of Substance Abuse

Performance Symptoms

- Excessive absenteeism
- Lower productivity
- Lower grades in school
- Deteriorating work quality like incomplete homework, class assignments
- Poor morale
- Increased minor accidents, mistakes
- Multiple reports of theft

Behavioral Symptoms

- Sudden change in attitude, work or behavior (I don't care attitude)
- Sudden deterioration of long friendships and relationships
- Explosive arguments and disagreement over petty matters
- Frequent hangover symptoms
- Secretive behavior
- Being erratic, forgetful, indecisive
- Deterioration in personal appearance and hygiene
- Hyperactivity, Easy excitability & Restlessness
- Frequent borrowing of money, financial issues



Physical Symptoms

- Blood spots and bruises on skin
- Bloodshot or watery eyes
- Runny or irritated nose, cough, sore throat
- Speech pattern changes, slurred speech
- Tremors or jitters
- Constant scratching of skin, picking skin or hair
- Poor body coordination, poor senses

- Easily fatigued or constantly fatigued

Psychological Symptoms

- Unexplained change in personality or attitude
- Sudden mood changes
- Irritability
- Anger outburst or laughing at nothing
- Periods of unusual hyperactivity or agitation
- Lack of motivation
- Inability to focus
- Appearing fearful or withdrawn

How to say 'NO' to Substance Abuse

- **If you're in a situation where someone is offering you alcohol or drugs, you can try this:**
 1. Look into the eyes of the person
 2. Tell the person that you don't want to drink or use drugs in a firm voice. Use statements like:
 - No, I am sorry, but I don't use them.
 - No, I am really trying to stay clean.
 - No, I am trying to cut back.
- **Give a proper reason that who you don't want to drink or use drugs. Say:**
 - I told you, I don't use them anymore, so stop asking.
 - I am trying really hard to stay clean, so please don't ask me to use anymore.
- If you notice that someone is having drugs, leave that place.

Intervention of Substance Abuse

The prime objective of substance abuse treatment is intended at:

- Discontinuing drug-seeking and its abuse
- Avoiding difficulties of drug withdrawal
- Rehabilitation
- Maintaining self-denial
- Regular treatment with therapies
- Preventing relapse.

Intervention strategies involve developing rapport, screening for substance use ,decide mode of intervention and follow upto prevent relapse.

Life Skills and Drug Refusal Skills has to be developed for prevention of substance abuse.

- Preventing the situation since it is the best way to stay away from in any abuse
- Identifying risk situations or drug abuse since it can serve as triggers to use drugs
- Saying 'NO' or clearly denying to intake drugs with the help of assertiveness
- Problem solving with the help of brain storming
- Replacing negative thinking with positive ones.
- Be assertive & **SAYNO TO DRUGS**

Video links:

<http://youtu.be/b6Dte96WdqM> ()

http://youtu.be/FN78E_iaITE ()

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHHKJiVnHIVKmMIOtBGi-1g>