

DRUG ABUSE AND ADDICTION

Drug abuse and addiction is the deliberate use of mind-altering substances in spite of the known adverse medical, psychological and social consequences. It can affect virtually every system in the body. Depending on the substance being abused, most produce a temporary, pleasant mood, relief from anxiety, false feelings of self-confidence, increased sensitivity to sights and sounds (including hallucinations), altered activity levels, stupor, sleep like states or frenzies, and unpleasant or painful symptoms when the abused substance is withdrawn.

Substances of abuse generally produce physiological and psychological need. The most common substances of abuse include, but are not limited to: nicotine, alcohol, marijuana, amphetamines, barbiturates, cocaine, opiates, codeine, heroin, methadone, morphine, opium, PCP (angel dust), mescaline and LSD. Volatile substances, such as glue, solvents and paints are often implicated.

The risk of drug abuse and addiction increases with illnesses requiring prescription pain relievers or tranquilizers, family history of drug abuse, genetic factors, excess alcohol consumption, fatigue or overwork, poverty, psychological problems, depression, dependency, poor self-esteem, and peer pressure.

Preventive measures include not socializing with persons who use and abuse drugs; seek counseling for mental-health problem, such as depression, or chronic anxiety before they lead to drug problems; develop wholesome interests and leisure activities; and after surgery, illness or injury, discontinue the use of prescription pain relievers and tranquilizers as soon as possible.

Drug abuse and addiction requires very strong motivation, good medical care and support from family and friends. However, relapses are common.

Possible complications include sexually transmitted diseases, which are more frequent among addicts; severe infections, such as endocarditis, hepatitis, blood poisoning, malnutrition, accidental injury to oneself or others while in a drug-induced state; loss of job or family; irreversible damage to body organs; death by over dosage, incarceration and HIV infection.

Treatment modalities revolve around seeking professional help for psychotherapy and counseling, possible hospitalization, and avoidance of friends who tempt you to resume your habit. Medications and a well-balanced diet and vitamins round out the treatment.

We at the Health Center will be happy to help you.



Healthfully yours,

Dr. Healthberry

For questions or comments you can;

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