

AVOIDANCE OF DRUGS

What are drugs?

Drugs are chemical substances. They change how the body and brain work. Some drugs are legal, like caffeine (in coffee or tea), nicotine (in cigarettes) and alcohol. Other drugs are illegal. Medicines are used to treat sickness. But some people misuse medicines like drugs.

What is drug addiction



Drug addiction is a long-lasting disease of the brain. It makes people want drugs all the time, even if it hurts them.

Addiction damages self-control. The person cannot stop the strong need to take drugs.

Most people cannot stop alone. A mix of medicine and therapy can help. This can support them to beat the addiction and stay drug-free for a long time.

Reasons for substance abuse

Social factors

- Peer pressure (one of the most important causes)
- Role models/imitation
- Easy to get drugs
- Family problems
- Cultural/religious reasons
- no support from family and friends
- Social attitude
- Parties and celebrations



Psychological factors

- Curiosity
- No self-control
- Looking for excitement (elation)
- Low self-esteem (anomie)
- Bad at handling stress
- Childhood loss or trauma
- To feel better when tired or bored
- To escape real life
- No goals in life
- Emotional pain



Biological factors

- Family history, genetic risk (some people are born with a higher chance to get addicted)
- Pre-existing mental and physical illness
- Drugs feel good at first
- Withdrawal effects and cravings
- Brain chemistry – some brain chemicals can increase the risk of addiction



What happens when young people use drugs?



Young people who often use illegal drugs can have many problems.

For example: Trouble at school (bad grades or dropping out), health problems (including mental health issues like depression), bad relationships with friends, trouble with the law (like going to court or getting arrested).

Drug use also hurts the family. And it causes problems for the whole society, like more crime or higher costs.

How can addiction be treated?

There are different ways to treat drug addiction. Medicines and talk therapy (behavioral therapy) are both helpful. They work best when used together.

Treatment often starts with detox – this means cleaning the drugs out of the body. After detox, people get help through therapy and support, so they don't start using drugs again.

Good treatment looks at all parts of a person's life:

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Life after treatment (called aftercare)

Each person needs a plan that fits their own life. This can help them stay drug-free for a long time.



Co-funded by
the European Union



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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission and Aktion Mensch. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.