

Substance Abuse or Dependence



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

Substance abuse is a pattern of alcohol or drug abuse leading to problems in a person's life. Problems can be from drinking alcohol or using drugs in situations that cause the person to:

- Put others at risk, such as driving, working with tools and watching children.
- Cause relationship problems with family and friends.
- Get into legal, work or school trouble.

Substance abuse can be the use of legal or illegal substances. Alcohol is the most common abused drug.

Substance dependence means the person has developed a "need" for alcohol or drugs. The person continues to drink or use in spite of problems in his or her life. Tolerance may develop so that he or she needs more alcohol or drugs to get the same effect. This person may have withdrawal. There are signs of physical or emotional distress when the person cuts back or stops use. As dependence grows, the person slips further away from family and friends. Performance at work or school drops and health problems arise. This person is not able to see the signs and relate life problems to his or her alcohol or drug use.

Treatment

Seek help if you or a loved one has signs of substance abuse or dependence. There are inpatient and outpatient programs for treatment. Programs may involve individual or group counseling. The focus of treatment is education about recovery and how to manage withdrawal symptoms. Family and friends are encouraged to take part in treatment. Participation in a Twelve Step Program is encouraged to establish and maintain a lifestyle free from alcohol and drugs.

Signs that there is a problem

- Drinks or uses drugs in spite of negative consequences.
- Not able to keep promises to stop or cut down use.
- Gets high or intoxicated regularly.
- Lies about use, especially about how much or how often he or she uses.
- Becomes defensive or angry when confronted about use.
- Withdraws from family and friends.
- Prefers the company of other drinkers or users.
- Becomes less involved in activities he or she used to enjoy sober, such as sports and hobbies, in favor of more drinking or partying activities.
- Talks a lot about alcohol or drugs.
- Believes that he or she needs to drink in order to have fun.
- Pressures others to drink or use.
- Hides or sneaks alcohol, drugs or supplies.
- Gets in trouble with the law.
- Takes risks, such as driving high or when drunk, or takes sexual risks.
- Work or school performance suffers.
- Misses work or school due to use.
- Has blackouts or periods of time when using that he or she cannot remember.
- Has mood swings.
- Has depressed, hopeless or suicidal feelings.

Those in treatment for substance abuse or dependence have special federal laws that protect their privacy. Information about a person in treatment cannot be released to anyone or any agency except under very strict and narrow conditions.

Programs at Ohio State's Talbot Hall

The programs offered at Talbot Hall can help you or a loved one achieve and maintain sobriety.

Some of the programs we offer:

Inpatient Detox – This program is under the direction of a doctor. It safely manages patients' withdrawal and prepares them for the next steps in the recovery process. Treatment is a combination of medicine and behavioral treatment. Patients also receive education, skills training, counseling and encouragement to participate in a 12-Step program.

Partial Hospitalization – This is a structured care program that runs Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM. It offers an alternative to more costly overnight hospitalization while providing support for those who may not be ready to make a full return to home or work. Most patients complete the program in 1 to 2 weeks.

Intensive Outpatient – This program allows patients to maintain family and work responsibilities. It runs for 4 to 8 weeks, for 3-hour sessions, 3 times per week. Family programming is offered and 12-Step participation is encouraged.

Individual or Group Therapy – Sessions help the person learn and practice skills to manage addiction. Medicines, such as buprenorphine (Suboxone), naltrexone (Revia, Vivitrol) or acamprosate (Campral) may be used in combination with counseling to provide a balanced approach to achieving and maintaining long-term recovery.

Call 614-257-3760 for more information or to schedule an appointment.



Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

The Library for Health Information is available to help you find more health information at (614) 293-3707 or e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.