



Substance Abuse



Overview

This is when you use alcohol or drugs in a way that harms you or puts you in danger. Abusing a substance can cause you to become dependent on it over time. You may feel powerless to stop using it. This can cause problems for you and your family. It can severely impact your life. It can be life threatening.

Causes

People abuse alcohol and drugs for many complex reasons. It may be linked to genetics. It may be linked to peer pressure, environment and other social and economic factors. Substance abuse often begins in childhood. Kids may try things like alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription medications. They may move on to other illegal drugs as they get older.

Warning Signs

A person who has a substance abuse problem may show warning signs. Substance abuse can cause aggressive behavior. It can cause a lack of self control, and poor social skills. A person who abuses substances may fail in school or work. He or she may spend a lot of time with friends who are also substance abusers.

Treatment

Treatment options depend on your needs. You may benefit from counseling and from support groups. You may benefit from medications. You may need to be treated for an underlying condition, such as depression. You may need long term followup care to prevent a relapse. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that's right for you.

Actor portrayals in photos

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