



Why Is Addiction a Disease?



Overview

Addiction is a complex issue that involves the brain and the body. It also leads to a lot of poor choices, secrets and lies. For some, it's hard to understand why we call addiction a "disease." So let's take a few minutes to learn about it.

What is addiction?

What is addiction? It's a chronic disease of the brain. It begins with a choice you make, like drinking alcohol, misusing a prescription drug, or using an illicit drug. But although it begins as a choice, over time, using the drug changes your brain. You begin to need the drug just to feel normal. You may lose interest in other things in your life that used to give you pleasure. When you don't have the drug, you may feel sick. At this point, using it is no longer a choice for you. You may do things that are completely out of character just to get more of the drug.

Similarities to other chronic diseases

Addiction is similar to other chronic diseases. We know it can run in families. It can be influenced by the conditions around you and the choices you make. And, like other chronic diseases, addiction can't be cured. But it can be managed successfully with treatment.

Conclusion

If you or someone you love is struggling with addiction, get help. Talk to your doctor. Contact an organization that specializes in addiction treatment. With proper care and support, you can get on the road to recovery.

Actor portrayals in photos

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