

# Addictions: Breaking the Cycle



## What is Addiction?

Addiction is a bio-psycho-social disorder characterized by repeated use of drugs, or repetitive engagement in a behavior such as gambling, despite harm to self and others.

When something controls you, instead of you controlling it.

Example:

Checking Instagram 50 times a day



## Dependence on substances

### Smoking, vaping, alcohol, drugs

**Nicotine** addiction may not appear as harmful as many other addictions. This is likely because tobacco products are legal and easy to get, and the worst side effects of abusing them take time to develop. Tobacco use claims more lives than any other addictive substance. Many smokers cannot quit despite knowing smoking's impact on their health. Wanting to quit but being unable to is a telltale sign of addiction.



### **Alcohol**

The social acceptance of drinking can make alcohol addiction hard to spot. Alcohol's potential for abuse opens users up to many health risks and possible addiction.

Alcohol abuse has numerous negative consequences. In addition to deaths from liver disease and alcohol overdose, drunk driving claims thousands of lives every year.

## Dependence on substances

**Substance use disorder (SUD)** is the persistent use of drugs (including alcohol) despite substantial harm and adverse consequences. Substance use disorders are characterized by an array of mental/emotional, physical, and behavioral problems such as chronic guilt; an inability to reduce or stop consuming the substance(s) despite repeated attempts; driving while intoxicated; and physiological withdrawal symptoms. Drug classes that are involved in SUD include: alcohol; caffeine; cannabis; hallucinogens, inhalants; opioids; hypnotics, or anxiolytics; tobacco; and other substances.





## Types of Addictive Behavior

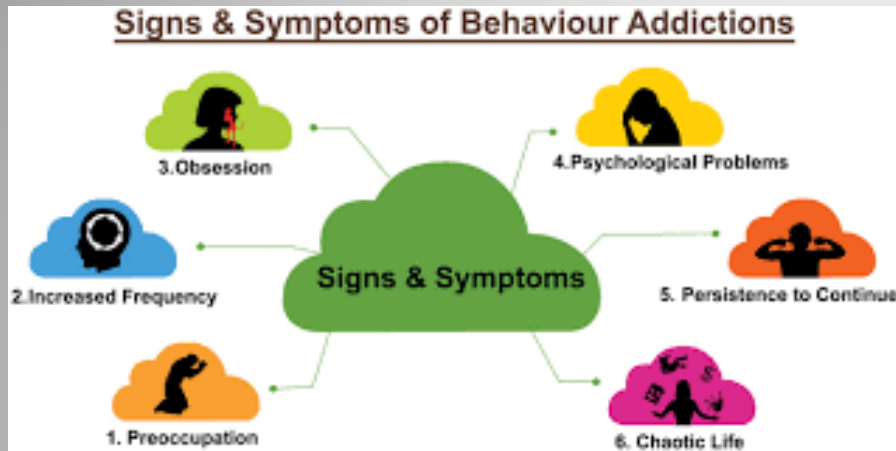
### Social media, gaming, shopping, eating

The term addiction does not only refer to dependence on substances such as heroin or cocaine. A person who cannot stop taking a particular drug or chemical has a substance dependence. Some addictions also involve an inability to stop partaking in activities, such as gambling, eating, or working.

- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Drugs (both pharmaceutical and narcotics)
- Coffee
- Gambling
- Eating disorders
- Compulsive shopping
- Working too much[Work addiction]
- Exercise addiction.
- Television
- The Internet
- Video game addiction



# General signs of addiction



## Signs

- ignoring risk factors despite potential consequences.
- lack of control, or inability to stay away from a substance or behavior.
- decreased socialization, like abandoning commitments or ignoring relationships.

## Are you:

- Thinking about it all the time?
- Struggling to stop even when you want to?
- Skipping responsibilities for it?

**“Have you ever stayed up past 2 a.m. gaming or scrolling TikTok?”**

## **“It’s not a choice—it’s a trap!” How does addiction develop?**

- Factors such as peer pressure, physical and sexual abuse, early exposure to drugs, stress, and parental guidance can greatly affect a person's likelihood of **addiction**. Genetic and environmental factors interact with critical developmental stages in a person's life to affect **addiction** risk

# How Addiction Starts

- Peer pressure.
- Stress or anxiety.
- Trying something “just once.”

**“Did you know video games are designed to keep you hooked with rewards? That’s how Fortnite keeps you playing!”**



## Why It's a Big Deal

Addiction can take over:

- Grades drop.
- You fight with friends and family.
- Your health takes a hit.

## Treatment

It's often extremely difficult to quit or control substance use alone without support from a trained professional. The first step of treatment for some forms of substance use disorder typically involves medically supervised detoxification. This won't treat the condition, but it can help people get through the withdrawal process safely. As with chemical addiction, many different factors can contribute to behavioral addictions. Treatment approaches can vary, but therapy is usually the first recommendation

**“Guess how many hours the average teen spends on their phone daily?”**

(Answer: 7.5 hours!)



# Ways to deal with the problem



- Education is very important; prevention is always better than treatment
- The sooner you get help the better
- Trained/ specialized psychologists/ therapists should be recruited at schools
- Addiction treatment centres should be fully equipped with qualified staff
- Family, relatives and friends/ loved ones of the addicted persons should try to understand them and be supportive without judging, criticising, blaming, humiliating or condemning them
- They should stand by them, encourage them
- Avoid abandonment or rejection.
- Imprisonment or any other form of punishment must be avoided. Addicted persons are patients, not criminals and they should be treated as such.
- Ongoing support is crucial to help deal with the challenges and prevent relapse

## How to Take Control

### The 3 Cs:

**Catch it early:** Recognize the signs.

**Cut down slowly:** Small steps work better.

**Connect:** Talk to someone you trust.

***“Addiction is giving up everything for one thing.  
Recovery is giving up one thing for everything.”***

## Breaking Free & Finding Balance

Things to try:

- Hobbies you love (sports, art, music).
- Set time limits (yes, even for TikTok).
- Talk to a school counselor or a friend.



## Myths About Addiction

- **Myth:** “It won’t happen to me.”
  - **Truth:** Anyone can get addicted.
- **Myth:** “You can stop anytime.”
  - **Truth:** It’s not that easy—it’s okay to ask for help.

## **You're Stronger Than Any Addiction!**

You've got the power to stay in control—  
your future is brighter without addiction!

