



Addiction

Understand the facts

Addiction is a condition that results when a person ingests a substance (e.g. alcohol, nicotine, legal or illegal drugs) or engages in an activity (e.g. gambling, sex, shopping) that can be pleasurable but the continuation of which becomes compulsive and interferes with ordinary responsibilities and concerns such as work, relationships, or health. People who have developed an addiction may not be aware that their behavior is out of control and causing issues for themselves and others.

Signs of addiction

- Have you ever sneaked or hidden your use?
- Has anyone ever suggested you quit or cut back on your drug/alcohol use?
- Has substance use or the activity affected your reputation?



Signs of addiction (continued)

- Have you ever switched to different drinks or drugs or changed your using pattern in an effort to control or reduce your consumption?
- Have you ever found yourself in financial, legal or marital difficulties due to substance use or the activity?
- Have you ever missed or not attended work because of substance use or engaging in the activity?



Self-care

- Write down the harmful effects of your addiction.
- Make a list of positive changes you want in your life.
- Make a plan to quit: Set a date to quit, write down your quitting commitment.
- Seek personal and professional support.
- Identify your triggers and avoid them as much as possible.
- Prepare your environment by removing reminders of your addiction.
- Fill your time with exercise or a new hobby.
- Do not let a relapse be the end of your journey.
- Celebrate your accomplishments.
- Remember, recovery is possible.



Further information

- Contact the [Employee Assistance Program](#) for free, confidential counseling services.
- Speak to your primary care physician if you are unsure where to start.
- Join a local support group or online forum.
- Be open to treatment options which may include therapy and/or medication.



Need more information?

- Understanding Addiction:
www.addictioncenter.com/addiction/.
- Harvard Health Publications:
www.health.harvard.edu/addiction/overcoming-addiction-paths-toward-recovery.
- BeyondBlue:
www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/drugs-alcohol-and-mental-health.