



# DRUG PROBLEM?

Identify Early Warning Signs

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**Glenbeigh**

ACMC Healthcare System

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# Do I Have a Drug Problem?

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If you are asking yourself this question you may already be abusing, or be dependent on, drugs. You should know you are not alone. Many people become dependent on prescription medications believing they are not dangerous. The first step is recognizing the early warning signs and learning if your use is problematic. Seek help from your doctor or an accredited treatment center specializing in addiction.

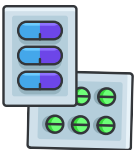


## What You Should Know

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The clinical term for drug dependence is "Substance Use Disorder." "Opioid Use Disorder" is for people misusing any type of opioid, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, or morphine, to name a few. Street opioids include fentanyl or heroin. It is possible to misuse and become addicted to both prescription and street drugs. The use of amphetamines, methamphetamine, benzodiazepines (tranquilizers), LSD, cocaine or crack cocaine are cause for concern.



When people with or without prescriptions obtain and take drugs for the mood altering effects, use turns into abuse. Mixing drugs with alcohol, or consuming a cocktail of drugs, may lead to accidental overdose or death. The effects on the body are unpredictable.



Drug addiction can spiral out of control quickly or take years to manifest. Everyone is different but abuse often leads to addiction. The National Institute on Drug Abuse warns that drugs can alter a person's thinking and judgment. Drug use often leads to health risks such as addiction or the acquisition of infectious diseases.



With proper treatment, you can learn to live without mood altering drugs. A recovery program can give you the tools needed to help you build a fulfilling life.

# Early Warning Signs

Drug use can begin at any age. Like any other disease, substance use disorder is progressive and if left untreated, can lead to significant health problems or death. This general guide offers insights into the warning signs of a possible drug use disorder.

## 01 Loss of Control



You take more pills than prescribed, or sooner than recommended, not following the directions. You feel you need more to get the same effect. You learn how to combine drugs to feel good.

## 02 Risk Taking



Once, or more than once, you've been in a dangerous situation such as driving while under the influence of drugs. You may connect with a street dealer to get drugs you can't get from your doctor any longer.

## 03 Physical Illness



You may experience drowsiness, shakiness, sweating, nausea, vomiting, lack of coordination, fatigue, muscle pain, itching, seizures, disorientation, or hallucinations.

## 04 Sleep Disturbances



You may experience insomnia or sleepiness. Nightmares and night sweats are common. You may have racing thoughts that keep you awake. You may take more drugs to make you relax and sleep.

## 05 Denial



You still go to work and take care of family. You believe the drugs make you more creative or productive, give you a needed boost, or help you deal with the kids.

## 06 Intense Emotions



You may experience anxiety, euphoria, guilt, depression, excitability, irritability or agitation. You may be compulsive, have mood swings, experience paranoia or be self-destructive.

## 07 Other Issues







You may experience nasal congestion or have a chronic runny nose. Your eyes may be dilated and watery. You may gag or have stomach cramps. You may lose interest in activities or detach from friends and family.

# What do I do now?

If you think you use drugs in an unhealthy manner, reach out for help. Talk to your doctor or a professional with experience in treating substance use disorders. To begin, you may be asked a series of questions, called a "screening." Below are some sample questions you may be asked. These are used to help determine the possible presence of a drug problem.







## Screening Questions

-  Have you used drugs for non-medical, or recreational, reasons?
-  Have people annoyed you, or complained, about your drug use?
-  Have you ever felt you ought to cut down? Do you feel bad about your drug use?
-  Do you take a drug more often than prescribed? Have you lied to your doctor, or engaged in illegal activities, to obtain drugs?

The questions presented are a sampling of a series of questions used to evaluate the possible presence of a drug use problem in adults. They are not all inclusive and are used only for screening purposes.

## Take Action

-  Pick up the phone and talk to an experienced professional. Many of our specialists have been there, understand and can help.
-  Screen. You will be asked more questions about your drug use and how it is effecting your life.
-  Options. Learn how you can stop using drugs and if it can be done with minimal disruption to your life.
-  Enjoy life again. You can experience a new life in recovery that is fun and fulfilling.

## Call 1-800-234-1001

for a free phone assessment, which is a conversation with a specialist to talk about your concerns. You will have the option to learn more about substance use disorder and treatment options.

Open 24/7

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