

Drug Addiction

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Definition

WHO (World Health Organization) defines drug addiction as **“a state of periodic or chronic intoxication detrimental to the individual and to society produced by the repeated consumption of drug, natural or synthetic”**

The word “addiction” implies **physical dependence**. ‘Drug addiction’ obviously means the physical dependence of a person/s on the use of some drugs. The drugs could be any one of the intoxicants such as heroin, brown sugar, cocaine, ganja, etc.

Addiction involves totally a drug-centred lifestyle.

The functioning of the body is so attuned to the drug, if it is withdrawn the person becomes totally uncomfortable and the “withdrawal symptoms” appear.



Characteristics of Drug Addiction

- ❑ An Uncontrollable desire for Drugs
- ❑ A tendency to increase the Doze
- ❑ Physical and Psychological Dependence on Drugs
- ❑ Harmful Effects on the Individual and the Society



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Drug

The word “drug” denotes any medicine, solid or liquid prescribed by a physician for the cure of a disease.

“Drug” is a chemical substance associated with distinct physical and / or psychological effects. It alters a person’s normal bodily processes or functions.



Drug Abuse

The word “abuse” refers to improper or wrong use of a thing. Obviously, “drug abuse” means improper and even illegal use of drugs.

Ram Ahuja states that “drug abuse is the use of illicit drug or misuse of legitimate drug resulting in physical or psychological harm.

Drug abuse is using natural /and or synthetic chemical substances like alcohol, tobacco, ganja, opium, cocaine etc. for non medical purposes to experience pleasure.

Characteristics of Drug Abuse



- ❖ The use of drugs in any form or style is considered as ‘illegal’
- ❖ The drug is used without proper medical advice and supervision
- ❖ It is used in excess of accepted standards of self-medication, and
- ❖ The use of drugs in this context leads to loss of control over the user’s behaviour

Drug Dependency

“Drug dependence” is yet another concept associated with the analysis of drug addiction. The term denotes habitual or frequent use of a drug. The use is so frequent that the individual virtually becomes dependent on it.

This dependence is of two types:

- (i) Physical dependence, and**
- (ii) Psychological dependence.**



Physical dependence

Physical dependence refers to the bodily dependence of a person on the use of the drug.

Due to the continuous use of the drug, the body becomes so adjusted to the presence of the drug that it will suffer pain, severe discomfort or even illness if the use of the drug is not continued. In a state of drug-addiction of a person, physical dependence reflects the bodily position of a person which requires continued administration of the drug in order to function.

Psychological Dependence

Psychological dependence refers to the strong craving for the drug.

The craving is so strong that the individual feels that his well-being depends only on its use.

Sometimes, the word "habituation" is used to refer to psychic or psychological dependence.



Drug Habituation and Drug Addiction

In the case of drug habituation', there is a desire but not a compulsion to continue taking the drug. There is also a little tendency to increase the dosage and there is some psychological dependence but not a physiological one. Drugs associated with habituation are cocaine derived from the coca shrub; derivatives of hump [hashish, marijuana) and the tranquillising drugs.

Addiction to a drug means that the body becomes so dependent on the toxic effects of the drug that one just cannot do without it. Most commonly used drugs which lead to addiction are the opium derivatives such as morphine, heroin, etc.



Signs of Drug Dependence

1. Persons experiencing a static panic and exhibiting anxiety reactions.
2. Impaired judgement and distorted perceptions of space or time.
3. Excessive suspicion of others (or attitudes of paranoia]
4. Occasional convulsions
5. Mental confusion, loss of contact with reality and lapses of memory.
6. Unhealthy physical appearance because of poor diet and personal neglect.
7. Severe drowsiness and finding oneself in sleepy mood.
8. Indifferent, apathetic and sometimes compulsive behaviour.
9. Dilated pupils, a flushed face, and a feeling of being chilly.
10. A deterioration of values.



Signs of Established Drug Addict



- ❑ Poor personal appearance
- ❑ Absenting from college / work
- ❑ Poor performance in college / work
- ❑ Poor and odd eating habits, loss of weight
- ❑ Prefers to be alone or with few others who also have the addiction.
- ❑ Erratic sleeping pattern; often found sleeping during the day and awake in the night.
- ❑ Telling lies to get money - for procuring the drug
- ❑ Stealing, selling personal and others' articles to get money.
- ❑ Needle marks on arms and legs and attempts to conceal them by wearing clothes with long sleeves.
- ❑ ****Doped**** appearance : appear dreamy, have slurred speech,
- ❑ Frequent clashes with law, involvement in accidents and in criminal acts.
- ❑ Moral deterioration
- ❑ Sickly appearance : disheveled hair, muddy eyes, dark and dry lips, skin and bones, skin infections.

Who is likely to become a Drug Addict?

- ❖ Young people and adolescents (teenagers]
- ❖ Persons from broken family [divorced / separated parents]
- ❖ Having history of alcohol / drug abuse, suicide among the near relatives, especially in parent[s]
- ❖ Having had difficult childhood, being treated with cruelty in childhood
Persons with excessive shyness, poor social abilities, poor self-esteem [i.e. inferiority complex]
- ❖ Persons with easy access to money as well as drugs.
- ❖ Persons associating closely with drug peddlers, drug users
Persons with emotional disorders like depression, severe tension/ anxiety due to whatever reasons.
- ❖ Persons with antisocial behaviour patterns.
- ❖ Persons in certain occupations are prone to develop addiction. Eg : Doctors, nurses, jobs involving frequent travels, actors, bar attenders, etc.



Why do people seek Drugs?

At first, many young people experiment with drugs for which the reasons include

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- Peer pressure i.e. pressure from friends.
- To feel one with the group in which they live.
- To feel “grown-up”
- To rebel against parents, teachers bosses, and other authority.
- Curiosity to have the experience, i.e. for “kicks”.
- To kill boredom
- To escape or reduce unpleasant experiences of life
- As an adventure
- Easy availability of money as well as the “drug”
- Adult examples, i.e., emulating others.
- To get more energy





THANK YOU