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LIGHTHOUSE

Information & Support

September 2022



ADDICTIONS

All addictions have the power to destroy families, friendships, careers, health and even lives. They can affect anyone, regardless of gender, age, race, occupation or social status.

What is addiction?

Addiction is defined as „a biopsychosocial disorder characterised by repeated use of drugs (an addictive substance) or repeated engagement in behaviours such as gambling, despite harm to self and others” [1]. Addiction is not about a lack of willpower or a desire to harm oneself. It is a brain disease that alters a person's thinking, impairing their ability to function.

Types of addiction

There are two main types of addiction:

1. Chemical addiction, which is the use of harmful substances such as alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
2. Behavioural addiction consists in compulsive behaviour, i.e. persistent activities that a person continually undertakes despite their harmfulness.

Universal symptoms of addiction:

Addictions can vary, but specialists have been able to distinguish universal symptoms indicating a potential problem.

Physical symptoms:

- changes in the regularity of eating or sleeping,
- physical damage,
- changes in external appearance (e.g. hygiene problems),
- increased tolerance to the substance.

Psychological symptoms:

- daily search for a substance or activity,
- using a substance or engaging in an activity despite the fact that they cause problems,
- engaging in risky behaviour,
- aggressive behaviour when not under the influence of the substance, seeking the substance „at any cost”.

Social symptoms:

- no longer engaging in hobbies or pleasurable activities,
- decreased performance at work or school, shirking duties,
- social withdrawal and secretiveness,
- denying that there is an addiction problem,
- financial problems due to overspending on addiction,
- conflicts with the law resulting from addiction.



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Inspire yourself to change for good





We recommend our articles on addiction >> [Symptoms of addiction](#), [Causes of addiction](#), [Addiction pattern](#), [Types of addiction](#), [How to recognise an addiction](#), [Am I addicted?](#)

What is a detox?

Detox, or detoxification, is an addiction treatment method that involves the abrupt withdrawal of an addictive substance, usually with the support of pharmacotherapy and psychological assistance. Its goal is to completely remove toxins from the body. When conducted under the guidance of a specialist, some elements are additionally introduced to alleviate the symptoms of the abstinence syndrome and to treat the diseases resulting from addiction.

And what is rehab?

This is a long-term treatment process, the first stage of which is detox. The main goal of rehab is to return to sobriety and consolidate abstinence. All activities undertaken in drug treatment are designed to prepare the patient to cope with their illness on their own without the help of therapy.

Rehab treatment usually lasts from three to as long as six months. It is constant work on oneself, one's character and willpower. Rehab can take place in weekly meetings with a therapist or in an inpatient facility. Apart from pharmacology and the alleviation of symptoms of the addictive substance withdrawal, therapeutic measures play a major role.

Psychotherapy in the treatment of addiction

The selection of therapy modality for an addict follows several familiarisation meetings with a specialist. This is when the appropriate pharmacotherapy can be better tailored. Moreover, psychotherapy is very helpful for the loved ones of the addict.

- **Individual psychotherapy** offers an opportunity to tailor treatment interventions to the needs of the addict. Direct contact with a therapist allows them to create an alliance to help them reinforce their resources and strengthen their character.
- **Group psychotherapy** – the most common form of addiction therapy. It requires a lot of commitment from the participants, including preparing their own biography and history of addiction, keeping a daily record of feelings, doing homework.
- **Support groups, AA** – these are good supportive methods after therapy. Support groups are open to all people who declare a desire to quit addiction. [Support groups](#) can be found in Poland to help with different types of addiction.

Adult Children of Alcoholics

Adult Children of Alcoholics Syndrome is diagnosed in people who have grown up in a family with an alcohol problem. Many times during their childhood they felt threatened, took on adult duties and responsibilities inadequate for their age. This causes many problems also in adulthood, difficulties in expressing emotions and establishing relationships. ACoA often struggle with loneliness: they very much want to be loved and accepted, but at the same time they are afraid of rejection, so they are stuck in limbo. They have not learned models of selfless love in their family, which is why it is so difficult for them to build a valuable relationship. A good solution is to go to therapy, where they can work through unconstructive childhood patterns and learn to establish good relationships.

Co-dependency

Addiction affects not only the addict but also their loved ones, who may become co-dependents. This happens when the family subordinates its life to the problem of addiction and the system in which it lives becomes highly dysfunctional. A co-dependent person begins to deny their own needs in favour of those of others, develops an excessive and exhausting feeling of being compulsively in control of the situation, and a sense of being unable to leave their partner. This disorder intensifies social withdrawal and the mistaken belief that one is capable of coping with the problem alone.

Addiction can destroy one's life on many levels, so if you feel you have a problem, don't wait. Consult the EAP24 specialists who can help you discern the problem.

*Don't wait, call now! If you feel that you have an addiction problem, contact professionals.
We are here to support you!*