

Substance and Alcohol Related Disorders

Substance use Disorder

Alcoholism

Gambling Disorder

What is a Substance Use Disorder?

According to the DSM-5, a substance use disorder describes a **problematic pattern of using alcohol or another substance that results in impairment in daily life or noticeable distress.**





- As with most addiction problems, **despite any consequences a person who has a problem with either alcoholism or drugs suffers, they will generally continue to use their drug of choice.**
- They may make half-hearted attempts to stop or cut back their use, but it usually does not work.

Alcohol Use Disorder



- Alcohol Use Disorder is a pattern of alcohol use that **involves problems controlling your drinking, being preoccupied with alcohol, continuing to use alcohol even when it causes problems, having to drink more to get the same effect, or having withdrawal symptoms when you rapidly decrease or stop drinking.**

Unhealthy alcohol use

- Unhealthy alcohol use includes any alcohol use that puts your health or safety at risk or causes other alcohol-related problems.



Binge drinking

- It also includes binge drinking - a pattern of drinking where **a male consumes five or more drinks within two hours** or a **female downs at least four drinks within two hours**.
- Binge drinking causes significant health and safety risks.



Symptoms of a disorder due to a substance

- The DSM-5 states that in order for a person to be diagnosed with a disorder due to a substance, they must display **2 of the following 11 symptoms within 12-months:**



- Consuming more alcohol or other substance than originally planned

- Worrying about stopping or consistently failed efforts to control one's use
- Spending a large amount of time using drugs/alcohol, or doing whatever is needed to obtain them
- Use of the substance results in failure to "fulfill major role obligations" such as at home, work, or school.



- “Craving” the substance (alcohol or drug)
- Continuing the use of a substance despite its having negative effects in relationships with others (for example, using even though it leads to fights or despite people’s objecting to it).





- Repeated use of the substance in a dangerous situation (for example, when driving a car)
- Giving up or reducing activities in a person's life because of the drug/alcohol use
- Continuing the use of a substance despite health problems caused or worsened by it. This can be in the domain of mental or physical health (psychological problems may include depressed mood, sleep disturbance, anxiety, or "blackouts").

What is a blackout?

- Person is unable to recall what happened the next day as a result of drinking



What is tolerance?

- Building up a tolerance to the alcohol or drug. Tolerance is defined by the DSM-5 as **“either needing to use noticeably larger amounts over time to get the desired effect or noticing less of an effect over time after repeated use of the same amount.”**




What is withdrawal?

- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms after stopping use. Withdrawal symptoms typically include, according to the DSM-5: **“anxiety, irritability, fatigue, nausea/vomiting, hand tremor or seizure in the case of alcohol.”**

Some Alcohol Withdrawal Symptoms:

- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Tremors
- Fever
- Nausea/Vomiting



Withdrawal

Alcohol Withdrawal

- Alcohol withdrawal can occur **when alcohol use has been heavy and prolonged and is then stopped or greatly reduced**. It can occur within several hours to four or five days later.



As bad as heroin withdrawal?

- Symptoms include sweating, rapid heartbeat, hand tremors, problems sleeping, nausea and vomiting, hallucinations, restlessness and agitation, anxiety, and occasionally seizures. Symptoms can be severe enough to impair your ability to function at work or in social situations.



What is considered one drink?



- The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism **defines one standard drink as any one of these:**
- **12 ounces** (355 milliliters) of **regular beer** (about 5 percent alcohol)
- **5 ounces** (148 milliliters) of **unfortified wine** (about 12 percent alcohol)
- **1.5 ounces** (44 milliliters) of **80-proof hard liquor** (about 40 percent alcohol)

Moderate vs. “Problem” drinking

Moderate drinking is generally defined as **2 drinks or less per day**. More than that is generally considered problem drinking.

It is not so much the amount of alcohol that is important as it is the **need** for it and the **inability to stop** once you have started drinking.



When does drinking become a problem?

- If your pattern of drinking **results in repeated significant distress and problems functioning in your daily life**, you likely have alcohol use disorder. It can range from mild to severe.
- However, even a mild disorder can escalate and lead to serious problems, so early treatment is important.



How do you know when you are on the “road to alcoholism”?

- Developing a drinking problem is not as clear cut as steps 1,2,3, but this is the typical progression one might follow:
- **Step 1**– drinks may perk up person, relieve anxiety or stress, make special occasions more fun, and temporarily take away the blues – use gradually increases and drinker comes to depend on the mood altering qualities of alcohol



- **Step 2** – drinker's life starts to revolve around alcohol – urge to drink starts earlier in the day, preference for alcohol-related activities - increasing tolerance accompanied by blackouts and increasing loss of control
- **Step 3** – characterized by obsession w/ alcohol to the exclusion of everything else – may drink around the clock – may drink self to death without help

Stereotype of an “Alcoholic”

- Walking around with a bottle in a brown paper bag and sleeping on a park bench
- In reality, most are functioning alcoholics who hold down a job, have a family, etc.



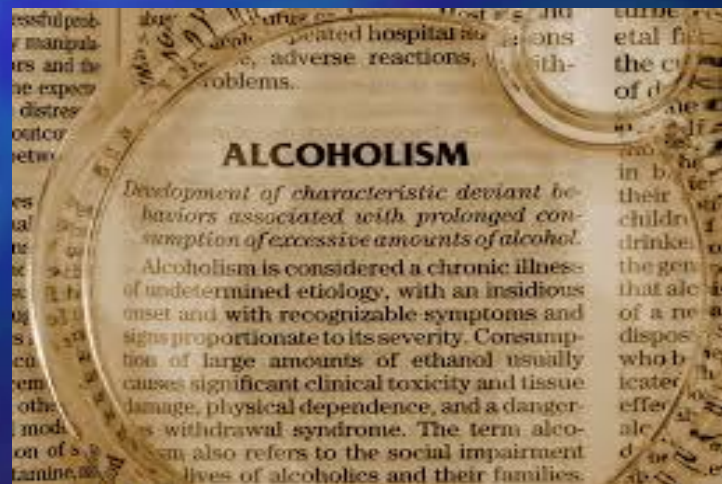
Denial



- Because denial is common, **you may not feel like you have a problem with drinking.** You might not recognize how much you drink or how many problems in your life are related to alcohol use. **Listen to relatives, friends or co-workers** when they ask you to examine your drinking habits or to seek help. Consider talking with someone who has had a problem drinking, but has stopped.

What causes alcohol use disorder?

- **Genetic, psychological, social and environmental factors** can impact how drinking alcohol affects your body and behavior. Theories suggest that **for certain people drinking has a different and stronger impact** that can lead to alcohol use disorder.



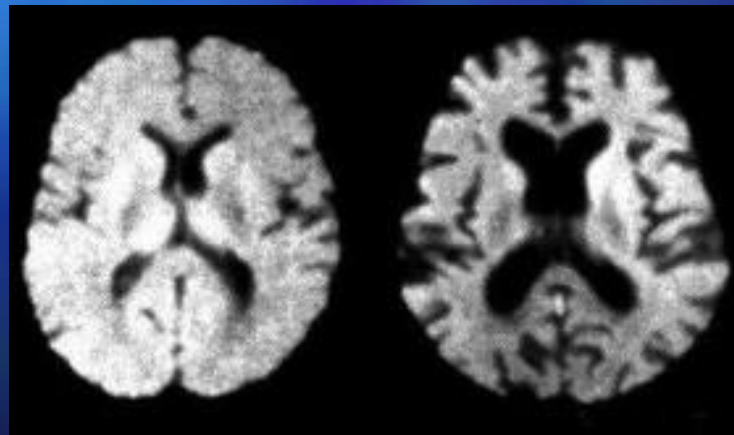
Genetic Predisposition

- While most adults who occasionally consume alcohol in moderation are not going to become alcoholics, **those who have a genetic predisposition to alcohol use disorder, should never even try alcohol** because they are at 4 times the risk of developing alcoholism than the average person.



Your Brain Actually Changes

Over time, drinking too much alcohol **may change the normal function of the areas of your brain associated with the experience of pleasure, judgment and the ability to exercise control over your behavior.** This may result in craving alcohol to try to restore good feelings or reduce negative ones.



Risk Factors for Alcohol Use Disorder

- **Steady drinking over time.** Drinking too much on a regular basis for an extended period or binge drinking on a regular basis can lead to alcohol-related problems or alcohol use disorder.



Age

- People who **begin drinking at an early age**, and especially in a **binge fashion**, are at a higher risk of alcohol use disorder. Alcohol use may begin in the teens, but alcohol use disorder occurs more frequently in the **20s and 30s**. However, it can begin at any age.



Family History

- The risk of alcohol use disorder is 4X higher for people who have a **parent or other close relative who has problems with alcohol**. This may be influenced by genetic factors.



Depression and other mental health problems

- It's common for people with a mental health disorder such as **anxiety, depression, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder** to have problems with alcohol or other substances.



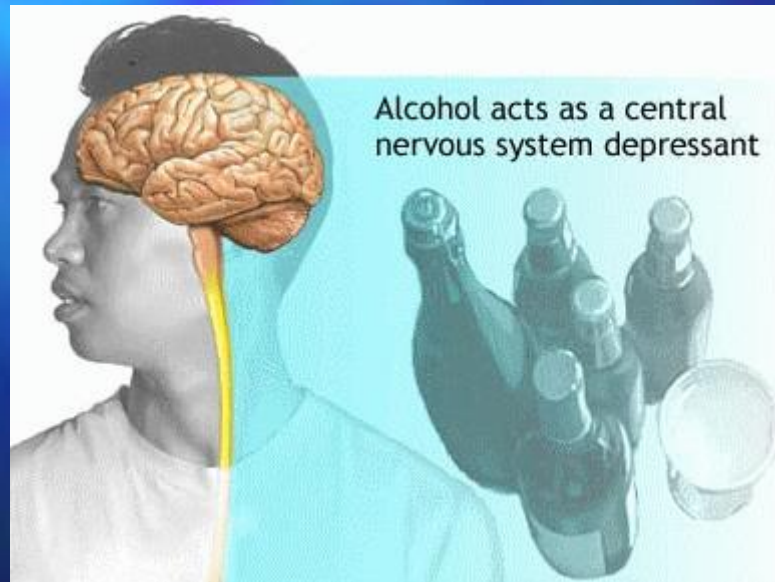
Social and cultural factors

- **Having friends or a close partner who drinks regularly** could increase your risk of alcohol use disorder. The **glamorous way** that drinking is sometimes **portrayed in the media** also may send the message that it's OK to drink too much. For young people, the **influence of parents, peers and other role models** can impact risk.



A Depressant

- Alcohol **depresses your central nervous system**. In some people, the initial reaction may be stimulation. But as you continue to drink, you become **sedated**.



Physical Effects



- Too much alcohol **affects your speech, muscle coordination and vital centers of your brain.** A heavy drinking binge may even cause a **life-threatening coma or death.** This is of particular concern when you're taking certain **medications** that also depress the brain's function.

Impact on Your Safety

- Excessive drinking can **reduce your judgment skills and lower inhibitions, leading to poor choices and dangerous situations or behaviors**, including:
 - Motor vehicle accidents and other types of accidental injury, such as drowning
 - Relationship problems
 - Poor performance at work or school

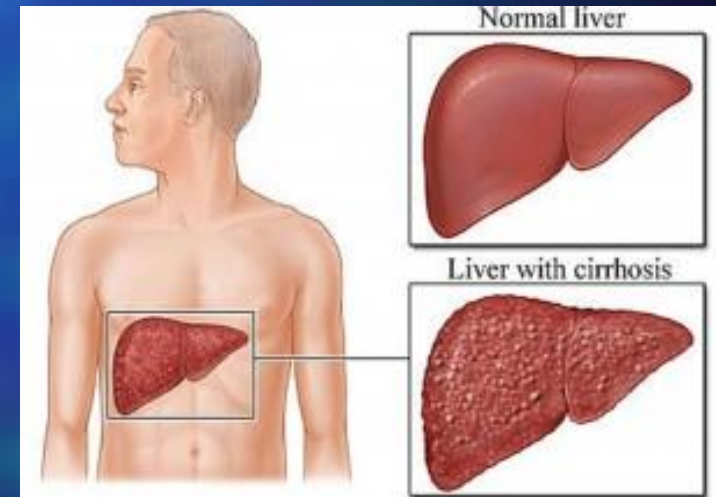
Other Dangers



- Increased likelihood of committing violent crimes or being the victim of a crime
- Legal problems or problems with employment or finances
- Problems with other substance use
- Engaging in risky, unprotected sex, or becoming the victim of sexual abuse or date rape
- Increased risk of attempted or completed suicide

Impact on your health

- Drinking too much alcohol on a single occasion or over time can cause health problems, including:
- Liver Disease
- Digestive Problems
- Heart Problems
- Neurological Complications
- Increased Risk of Cancer
- Birth Defects
- And Many other physical problems...



Treatment



- Treatment for alcohol use disorder can **vary**, depending on your needs. Treatment may involve a **brief intervention, individual or group counseling, an outpatient program, or a residential inpatient stay**. Working to stop the use of alcohol to improve quality of life is the main treatment goal.

Detox and withdrawal

- Treatment may begin with a program of detoxification or **detox** - *withdrawal that's medically managed* - which generally takes *two to seven days*. You may need to take sedating medications to prevent withdrawal symptoms. Detox is **usually done at an inpatient treatment center or a hospital.**



Other Treatment

- Treatment may also include **learning skills and establishing a treatment plan, counseling** (particularly if there are other mental health issues such as depression) and **medication** that will make you sick if you drink (called Antabuse).



Continuing Support

- **Aftercare programs and support groups** help people recovering from alcohol use disorder to **stop drinking, manage relapses and cope with necessary lifestyle changes**. This may include medical or psychological care or attending a support group (like AA).



Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

- Does it work?
- About 1/3 recover
- 1/3 struggle back and forth
- 1/3 become alcohol dependent or die



Sobriety

- Despite these sobering statistics, this is still the **most effective long term treatment plan** for many alcoholics.
- This just goes to show **how difficult it is to stop drinking** once you develop a problem.



A Lifelong Struggle



- For many, attending frequent AA meetings becomes necessary in order to stay sober.
- **Can never touch alcohol again** after becoming sober— even one sip can send you right back down the path to alcoholism.
- **“Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic”.**

Residential treatment programs

- For a serious alcohol problem, you may need a stay at a residential treatment facility. Most residential treatment programs include individual and group therapy, support groups, educational lectures and family involvement.
- Residential treatment programs typically include licensed alcohol and drug counselors, social workers, nurses, doctors and others with expertise and experience in treating alcohol use disorder.

Staying Clean & Sober

- Once you're sober you need to focus on changing your habits and making different lifestyle choices.
- **Consider your social situation.** Make it clear to your friends and family that you're not drinking alcohol. *Develop a support system* of friends and family who can support your recovery. You may need to **distance yourself from friends and social situations that impair your recovery.**

Develop healthy habits

- Good sleep, regular physical activity, managing stress more effectively and eating well all can make it easier for you to recover from alcohol use disorder.



Do things that don't involve alcohol

- You may find that many of your activities involve drinking. Replace them with hobbies or activities that are not centered around alcohol.
- This can be very challenging for someone who's lifestyle has revolved around drinking.



Support Groups

- **Alcoholics Anonymous.** AA is a self-help group of people recovering from alcoholism that offers a sober peer group built around 12 steps as an effective model for achieving total abstinence.



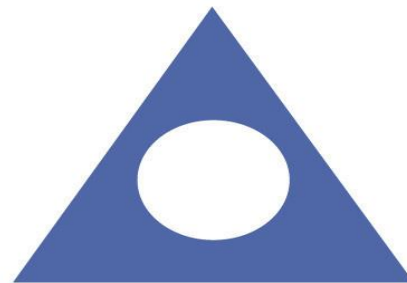
Other Support Groups

- **Women for Sobriety.** Women for Sobriety is a nonprofit organization offering a self-help group program for women who want to overcome alcoholism and other addictions. It focuses on developing coping skills related to emotional and spiritual growth, self-esteem and a healthy lifestyle.



Support for those living with an alcoholic

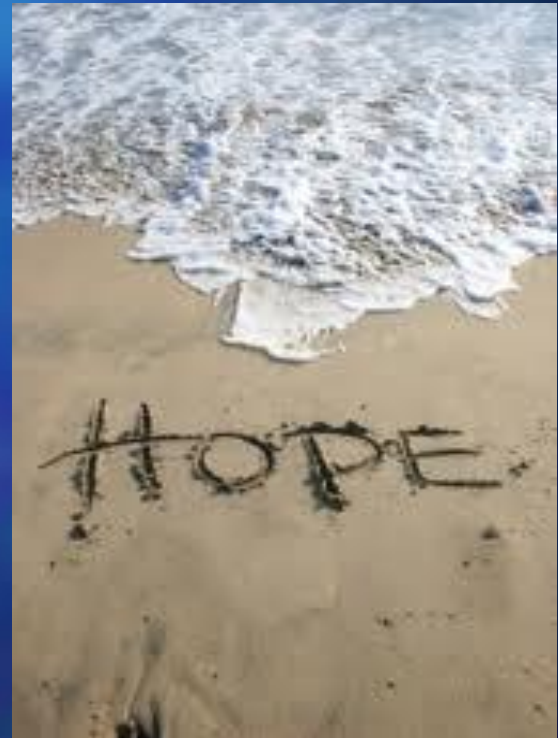
- **Al-Anon.** Al-Anon is designed for people who are affected by someone else's alcoholism.
- **Alateen.** Alateen groups are available for teenage children of those with alcoholism. In sharing their stories, family members gain a greater understanding of how the disease affects the entire family.



Al-Anon

How to help someone with an alcohol problem

- See p. 341 in packet



Sources

- PsychCentral.com
- MayoClinic.org