

Substance Institute  
presents



Module 9 – Student's  
Manual  
**Substance Abuse &  
Drug Therapy**

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## **What Is a Substance?**

Substances refer to illegal drugs, prescription or over-the-counter drugs, and alcohol.

Caffeine, nicotine, anabolic steroids, and synthetic drugs are also considered substances. While not all substances are harmful when consumed in moderation—caffeine or prescription medications, for instance—problems can occur when they are abused.

Substance use disorders are on the rise and account for hundreds of billions of dollars in repercussions.<sup>1</sup>

This article discusses the types of substances, the impact of substance abuse, and how to get help if you have a substance use disorder.

## **Types of Substances**

Here are the most commonly abused substances and their impacts on the individual and societal levels.

### **Illegal Drugs**

Illegal drug use is a prevalent form of substance abuse. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, these substances are addictive because they involve changes to the brain circuits involved in stress, reward, and self-control.<sup>2</sup>

While people may turn to them for mood alterations, these drugs can impair judgment, delay reaction times, and distort perceptions, which can put the user in danger.

Consequences of illegal drug abuse include cardiovascular disease, hepatitis B and C, mental disorders , and cancer.<sup>3</sup>

Here are the most commonly abused illegal drugs in the U.S:

- Marijuana
- Methamphetamine
- Heroin
- Hallucinogens
- Molly or ecstasy
- Cocaine

### **Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs**

Abuse of prescription drugs occurs when medications are taken at a dose or in a manner other than prescribed; taking another's prescription, even for a valid concern such as pain; and taking a medication to get high.<sup>4</sup>

Commonly abused drugs are clumped into three categories:

- Opioids: prescribed for pain relief (e.g., fentanyl, oxycodone, codeine)
- Central nervous system depressants: used for sleep and anxiety disorders (e.g., benzodiazepines and barbiturates)

- Stimulants: commonly used to treat ADHD, (e.g., amphetamines such as Adderall and Ritalin)

Prescription drug misuse continues to be an ongoing concern.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports an increase in opioid overdose-related deaths from 3,442 in 1999 to 16,416 between 2019 and 2020.<sup>4</sup>

It's important to note that over-the-counter (OTC) medications are also likely to be abused.

Cough medicines, analgesics (used for pain management), and antihistamines are among the most frequent types of OTC medications that are misused.<sup>5</sup>

## **Alcohol**

Today's culture has perpetuated binge drinking, which is especially common among young people. Like illegal and prescription drugs, alcohol can become addictive when individuals lose control over their consumption, drink compulsively, and feel negative emotions in its absence.<sup>6</sup>

## **Caffeine**

Coffee is the most commonly used drug in the world.<sup>7</sup> Though it is an everyday ritual for many adults, too much can lead to adverse effects.

## **Nicotine**

Chemicals present in tobacco make their use dangerous, and in many cases, deadly.

Prolonged use of these nicotine-containing products can lead to fatal respiratory issues such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and lung cancer.<sup>10</sup>

## **Anabolic Steroids**

Anabolic steroids are synthetic versions of testosterone, the male sex hormone. Athletes and bodybuilders often turn to them to enhance performance and increase muscle mass.

## **Synthetic Drugs**

So-called “designer drugs” have been popular since the 1980s and 1990s, when they arose in the midst of “rave” culture.

These substances have the potential to be abused and include:

- LSD
- Ketamine
- PCP

## **Societal Impact of Substance Abuse**

Substance use disorders (SUDs) are on the rise. They can often co-occur with other mental health conditions.

In 2019, 20.4 million people aged 12 or older (or 7.4% of this population) had a SUD in the past year, including 14.5 million who had an alcohol use disorder and 8.3 million who had an illicit drug use disorder.<sup>12</sup>

## **Substance Use Disorder**

Substance use disorder is a condition that causes a person to develop an uncontrollable urge to use certain substances. A person with this condition will continue to use the substance despite experiencing negative consequences to their health or social lives. The condition is also known as substance abuse or substance dependency.

Substance abuse treatment can be complicated. Unlike some medical conditions that need treatment for a few days or weeks, treatment for substance abuse is lifelong.

A treatment plan varies from individual to individual. Factors such as how long the substance has been abused, what kind of substance it is, and a person's age and gender will also be considered when charting a treatment plan. However, in general, treatment involves a combination of medication and psychotherapy.



## **Detoxification**

Substance abuse treatment is a journey; the first step is detoxification, more casually referred to as detox.

Detox involves weaning a person off of the substance they are dependent on. Depending on the individual, this process can take a few days to several weeks.

Detoxing causes withdrawal symptoms that range in severity and can be deadly if you are not equipped to handle them.<sup>1</sup> Risks of Quitting Cold Turkey

## **Psychotherapy**

Many forms of psychotherapy can be considered when treating substance abuse treatment.

Therapy can either be done in an inpatient or outpatient treatment facility.

A combination of two or more of the following therapies are most likely to be considered:

- Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT): Behavioral therapy is the most common form of psychotherapy used in substance abuse treatment.
- Family therapy: Family therapy attempts to involve your family in your recovery process.
- Dialectal behavior therapy (DBT): DBT focuses on providing you with four skills

to regulate your emotions and curb your cravings. Mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness are the skills.<sup>3</sup>

- Contingency Management (CM): With CM, people with substance use disorder are rewarded for staying sober. The aim is to encourage positive habits and behavior by implementing a reward system.<sup>4</sup>
- The Matrix Model: The matrix model is a therapy primarily used with people dependent on stimulants. With the help of a trained therapist, you'll be taught self-help techniques to help prevent a relapse. Your therapist will focus on conducting your sessions so that your dignity and self-esteem are uplifted.<sup>5</sup>
- 12-step program: This is a self-help program that helps you accept the reality of your condition, surrender yourself to a higher power and the support of the program, and engage in the program's activities.

## The 12 Steps of Recovery Programs

The Twelve Steps, originated by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), is a spiritual foundation for personal recovery from the effects of alcoholism, both for the person using alcohol as well as their friends and family in Al-Anon Family Groups.<sup>1</sup> The 12 steps are also used in recovery programs for addictions other than alcohol.

By exploring the steps in depth and seeing how others have applied the principles in their lives, you can use them to gain insight into your own experiences, and to gain strength and hope for your own recovery.

The steps and their principles are:

1. Honesty: After many years of denial, recovery can begin with one simple admission of being powerless over alcohol or any other drug a person is addicted to. Their friends and family may also use this step to admit their loved one has an addiction.
2. Faith: Before a higher power can begin to operate, you must first believe that it can. Someone with an addiction accepts that there is a higher power to help them heal.
3. Surrender: You can change your self-destructive decisions by recognizing that you alone cannot recover; with help from your higher power, you can.
4. Soul searching: The person in recovery must identify their problems and get a

clear picture of how their behavior affected themselves and others around them.

5. Integrity: Step 5 provides great opportunity for growth. The person in recovery must admit their wrongs in front of their higher power and another person.
6. Acceptance: The key to Step 6 is acceptance—accepting character defects exactly as they are and becoming entirely willing to let them go.
7. Humility: The spiritual focus of Step 7 is humility, or asking a higher power to do something that cannot be done by self-will or mere determination.
8. Willingness: This step involves making a list of those you harmed before coming into recovery.
9. Forgiveness: Making amends may seem challenging, but for those serious about recovery, it can be a great way to start healing your relationships.
10. Maintenance: Nobody likes to admit to being wrong. But it is a necessary step in order to maintain spiritual progress in recovery.
11. Making contact: The purpose of Step 11 is to discover the plan your higher power has for your life.
12. Service: The person in recovery must carry the message to others and put the principles of the program into practice in every area of their life.

## What to Expect From Drug and Alcohol Rehab Programs

### **Medication**

Medications are used for two crucial reasons in the recovery journey:

1. Coping with withdrawal symptoms. They help a person with the condition cope with withdrawal symptoms at the beginning of their journey. Withdrawal symptoms are side effects that people with this disorder experience when they stop using a substance, they are dependent on. The symptoms can be bothersome and even deadly in some cases.
2. Relapse prevention. Medications are also used to prevent a person with this condition from relapsing.

### **Withdrawal Medication**

Catapres (clonidine) or opioid medications such as Dolophine (methadone) or Buprenex (buprenorphine) may be administered to help with severe opioid withdrawal symptoms.

These drugs help alleviate withdrawal symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, insomnia, anxiety, and tremors. Withdrawal symptoms occur when a person begins to detox from a drug.<sup>6</sup>

In general, health care practitioners recommend that you slowly taper off the use of the drug

instead of quitting cold turkey. Suddenly stopping certain substances after prolonged periods of use can cause severe symptoms. Even with this, withdrawal symptoms can be very intense with substances such as opioids and might need medication administered to help alleviate these symptoms.

Valium (diazepam) might be recommended to help sedate people going through withdrawal symptoms from stimulants. It's only administered if a person shows signs of agitation or distress.<sup>6</sup>

## **Relapse Medication**

Relapse medications work by helping to reduce cravings for a substance and reform brain function so that you are not thinking of these substances.<sup>7</sup>

Scientists and researchers have developed medications to help prevent relapses with the following substances:

- **Opioids:** Researchers have developed several medicines to help kick opioid abuse. The three most common are Vivitrol (naltrexone), Methadose or Dolophine (two brands names for methadone), and Suboxone (buprenorphine/naloxone).<sup>8</sup>
- **Alcohol:** Campral (acamprosate), Antabuse (disulfiram), and Vivitrol (naltrexone) are the only three drugs approved by the FDA for the treatment of alcohol dependency.

Antabuse works by creating unpleasant symptoms whenever you drink alcohol. It's most effective for people who are highly motivated to recover voluntarily.<sup>9</sup>

- **Nicotine:** Zyban (bupropion) and Chantix (varenicline) are currently the only two prescription medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of nicotine addiction. Other nicotine replacement drugs in the form of patches and nasal sprays can also be gotten over the counter at most pharmacies.<sup>9</sup>

### **Should an Addiction Treatment Include the Family?**

"Family therapy can help families become aware of their own needs and aid in the goal of keeping substance abuse from moving from one generation to another."

## **How to Make Your Treatment Most Effective**

Substance abuse treatment is a lifelong journey. One of the main aims of treatment is to prevent a relapse. While treatment helps with this, you also have a crucial role.

Here are some ways you can make your treatment most effective include:

- **Meditation:** Meditating is a great way to cope with the mental stress of recovering from substance abuse. The practice helps you approach your treatment with a positive and peaceful attitude.

- **Exercise:** Physical activity has many benefits for both your physical and mental health. Daily activity can help fortify your body and mind for the journey ahead.
- **Diet:** Being watchful of everything you consume is particularly important when recovering from substance abuse. The importance of a balanced and nutritious diet cannot be over-emphasized.

## **What Is Substance Dependence?**

Substance dependence occurs when a person is physically dependent on a substance such as alcohol, nicotine, drugs, or medication, to the extent that their body adapts to it and develops a tolerance to it, resulting in withdrawal symptoms when they stop using it.<sup>1</sup>

## **Commonly Used Substances**

These are some of the most commonly used types of substances:<sup>7</sup>

- Depressants, which reduce anxiety and cause drowsiness.
- Stimulants, which stimulate the brain and nervous system.
- Hallucinogens, which cause people to hear or see things that don't exist.
- Opiates and narcotics, are strong painkillers that reduce pain, induce drowsiness, and produce feelings of well-being, happiness, and excitement.



- Marijuana, which produces a sense of happiness, calm, and relaxation.

### **Substance Dependence Symptoms**

These are some of the symptoms and behaviors associated with substance dependence and substance use disorder:<sup>7</sup>

- Needing the substance on a daily basis
- Developing a tolerance to the substance and needing to take more of it over time to achieve the same effect
- Losing control over use of the substance and being unable to stop using it
- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms upon stopping one's use of the substance
- Spending a lot of time procuring, using, and recovering from the aftereffects of the substance
- Using the substance in risky settings
- Missing school or work, or performing poorly
- Avoiding recreational and social activities due to substance use
- Continuing to use the substance despite negative consequences to one's family, work, and health
- Making excuses to use the substance
- Using the substance when alone
- Resorting to secretive behaviors to hide one's use of the substance
- Becoming hostile when confronted with one's substance dependence

- Neglecting to eat and maintain personal hygiene

## Stages of Substance Use

Substance use often progresses in stages, which can include<sup>7</sup>

1. **Experimentation:** This stage often involves trying different substances with one's peers, sometimes with the goal of defying one's parents or other authority figures.
2. **Regular use:** This stage involves using the substance more often, displaying an increased ability to handle it, and starting to develop a tolerance to it. The person may use the substance to try and fix negative feelings. Their loved ones may notice that they are starting to miss school or work, and that they spend less time with their family and friends and more time with people who are misusing drugs as well.
3. **Dependence:** Dependence occurs when the person's body adapts to the substance and becomes physically dependent on it, causing them to need more and more of it to achieve the same effect.<sup>1</sup>
4. **Problematic use:** The person prioritizes their use of the substance over everything else, including their relationships, school, work, family, and other interests. They lose all motivation to do anything else and display significant behavior changes. They

may worry about losing their source of the substance, engage in risky or secretive behaviors to obtain more of it or even start selling it themselves, to support their habit.

5. **Addiction:** In this stage, the person loses control over their use of the substance and cannot face everyday life without it. They deny that they have a problem despite mounting health issues, family conflicts, financial difficulties, and legal problems as a result of their substance use.

## **Causes of Substance Dependence**

A combination of factors can contribute to the risk of developing substance use disorder, including<sup>8</sup>

- **Social pressures**
- **Environmental stressors**
- **Genetic vulnerability**
- **Individual personality characteristics**
- **Mental health conditions**

## **Diagnosing Substance Dependence**

If you suspect you may have become physically dependent on a prescription medication that your healthcare provider has asked you to take, contact the physician who prescribed the medication to you.

## **Substance Dependence Treatment**

Treatment for substance dependence can vary depending on factors such as:<sup>8</sup>

- Age
- Medical history
- Symptom severity
- Dependence severity
- Type of substance used
- Tolerance for medication, procedures, and other treatments
- Lifestyle and personal preference

### **Treatment Approaches for Substance Use Disorder**

- **Detoxification**, to help flush the substance out of the person's system.  
The detox process may need to be undertaken at a hospital or treatment facility if the person is at risk of experiencing severe withdrawal symptoms or health complications.
- **Medication**, to treat any withdrawal symptoms, reduce cravings for certain substances, and prevent relapse.
- **Therapy**, to help the person explore their motivations and behaviors, cope with stressors and triggers, and address any other mental health conditions they may have. Therapy can be performed on an individual basis or group basis, and may involve partners or family members.
- **Rehabilitation**, or rehab, which involves staying in a treatment facility for a certain period of time.

- **Mutual-aid groups**, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Cocaine Anonymous (CA), or SMART Recovery, that follows a peer-based recovery model.

## Why Quitting an Addiction Can Be So Challenging

Substance dependence and addiction are complex conditions; however, they are treatable. If you or a loved one are experiencing dependence, it's important to seek help and treatment as soon as possible.



## Criteria for Substance Use Disorders

Substance use disorders span a wide variety of problems arising from substance use, and cover 11 different criteria:<sup>1</sup>

1. Taking the substance in larger amounts or for longer than you're meant to.
2. Wanting to cut down or stop using the substance but not managing to.
3. Spending a lot of time getting, using, or recovering from use of the substance.
4. Cravings and urges to use the substance.
5. Not managing to do what you should at work, home, or school because of substance use.
6. Continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships.
7. Giving up important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of substance use.
8. Using substances again and again, even when it puts you in danger.
9. Continuing to use, even when you know you have a physical or psychological problem that could have been caused or made worse by the substance.
10. Needing more of the substance to get the effect you want (tolerance).
11. Development of withdrawal symptoms, which can be relieved by taking more of the substance.

## **Questions & Answers**

**1. What are psychoactive drugs and how much are they used?**

**Alcohol and cocaine are examples of psychoactive drugs.** Psychoactive drugs are substances that can alter the consciousness, mood, and thoughts of those who use them.

**2. How do psychoactive drugs affect health?**

Psychoactive drugs impose a substantial health burden on society. Tobacco and alcohol in particular are major causes of death and disability in developed countries, and the impact of tobacco is expected to increase in other parts of the world.

**3. How does drug addiction affect the functioning of the brain?**

Drug addiction, also referred to as drug dependence, is a disorder of the brain caused by the use of psychoactive drugs. A drug-dependent person may experience cravings for the drug and difficulty in controlling its consumption, suffer from withdrawal symptoms when use of the drug is reduced or discontinued, and need increasing doses of the drug to feel its effects (tolerance).

**4. How does drug addiction develop?**

The development of drug addiction can be seen as a learning process

### **5. Why do drug addiction and mental illness often coexist?**

Drug addiction is more common among people with mental disorders than among the general population. For example, people with mental disorders are more likely to be alcohol dependent at some stage in their lives than people without a mental illness.

### **6. How can addiction to psychoactive drugs be prevented and treated?**

The most effective way to treat drug addiction seems to be a combination of medication and behavioral therapies which are a kind of psychotherapy. New and better treatments are currently being developed.

### **7. Conclusions**

Drug use and addiction impose a substantial health burden on society. Recent advances in brain research may help to find ways to reduce that burden.

Aspects that should be taken into account to ensure effective actions include:



1. The health impact of drug use depends on the type of drug and the way it is used (amount, frequency, etc.).
2. The greater a person's drug use, the higher the risk of becoming dependent.
3. Effective public health programmes can reduce the overall health burden of drug use.
4. Dependence is caused by many factors, and it is currently impossible to predict who will become drug dependent.
5. Drug dependence is a medical disorder that could affect anyone and that can be treated.
6. Drug dependence and mental illness often affect the same individuals.
7. Beyond stopping drug use, effective treatment requires changes in the behaviour of users and often the use of substitute drugs.
8. Treatment must be accessible to all in need.
9. Prejudice and discrimination against drug dependent people is one of the main barriers to their treatment.
10. Brain research should continue to help devise effective ways to reduce the harm caused by drug use and dependence.

## **Principles of Effective Treatment**

- a) No single treatment is appropriate for all
- b) Treatment needs to be readily available
- c) Effective treatment attends to the multiple needs of the individual
- d) Treatment plans must be assessed and modified continually to meet changing needs
- e) Remaining in treatment for an adequate period of time is critical for treatment effectiveness
- f) Counseling and other behavioral therapies are critical components of effective treatment
- g) Medications are an important element of treatment for many patients
- h) Co-existing disorders should be treated in an integrated way
- i) Medical detox is only the first stage of treatment. Treatment does not need to be voluntary to be effective
- j) Possible drug use during treatment must be monitored continuously
- k) Treatment programs should assess for HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B & C, Tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases and help clients modify at-risk behaviors

13. Recovery can be a long-term process and frequently requires multiple episodes of treatment - NIDA (1999) Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment

## **12 Types of Drug Abuse and Addiction**

Two of the most common types of drugs that are abused are alcohol and tobacco. Both are pervasive in society, legal, marketed heavily, and inexpensive.

**The following is a list of 12 types of drugs that can be abused:**

1. Alcohol
2. Tobacco
3. Heroin
4. Cocaine
5. Meth
6. Painkillers
7. Antipsychotics
8. Marijuana
9. Stimulants
10. Inhalants
11. Benzodiazepines
12. Barbiturates

The types of drug abuse that exist certainly go far beyond that list. Those twelve types of drugs that can be abused account for the vast majority of drug abuse across the country.

Explore a few of the most abused drugs from that list below:

### **Alcohol**

The impact of alcohol makes itself clear. People who drink display motor impairment, loss of judgment, balance issues, and slurred speech. When abused, alcohol also causes blackouts and memory loss. Alcohol is the most abused drug in the United States and the world

### **Tobacco**

The public well understands the connection between smoking and cancer. In fact, it's a leading cause of cancer.

### **Cocaine**

Cocaine is a powerful stimulant. Using cocaine produces a major high. It's also habit-forming. Long-term cocaine use alters the brain's neural pathways and leaves people at higher risk of mental health disorders and mood problems. Over time, cocaine abuse can also damage multiple internal systems, leaving people at risk of organ failure, stroke, or neurological issues.

### **Heroin**

Heroin is one of the most serious types of drug abuse. It often stems from opioid prescriptions.

### **Meth**

Meth usage remains less common than any of the other four drugs highlighted above. Nonetheless, meth abuse symptoms are especially frightening. Using meth essentially causes the body to decay.

### **Overcome Drug Abuse With Sunstone Recovery**

Many types of drugs that people abuse fly under the radar. All too often, things like alcohol and tobacco abuse get a pass in a way that doesn't happen with illegal drugs. True, they may not be as immediately life-threatening. However, abusing alcohol and tobacco can have major consequences.

There are a variety of short- and long-term effects of drug abuse. Short-term effects include impaired judgment, coordination, and decision making; increased anxiety or panic; paranoia; and visual, auditory, and tactile hallucinations. These effects can be even more pronounced if the drugs are used in combination with alcohol or another central nervous system depressant. Long-term effects of drug abuse can lead to addiction, chronic health problems, and death.

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# Substance Institute



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## **Module 8 - Homework** **Substance Abuse & Drug** **Therapy**

# Homework – Module 9 – Substance Abuse & Drug Therapy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Question 1:** This question will help build you resource database to help your clients.

If you or a loved one are struggling with substance use, or addiction, contact who the support and treatment facilities in your area is.

**List at least 3 out of 5** - List their Resource center’s contact person, the company’s names, their addresses, and contact numbers.

Here is an example:- Contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline at **1-800-662-4357** for information on support and treatment facilities in your area.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2: What are the traditions that serve as a guideline that defines the internal operations of the 12-step programs**

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12. \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 3: What is Substance Abuse?**

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**Question 4: What are the principles that define the 12-Step Program for Substance & Drug abuse?**

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**Question 5: What is Substance Abuse Disorder?**

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