

What Are Drugs?

Drugs are chemical substances introduced into the body that produce physical, emotional, or mental changes. Some drugs are helpful; some drugs are harmful.

One of the side effects of living in a world where evil abounds is that the very things God created for our good can be misused for our harm. Such is the case with drugs. Those who take what God intends for good but instead use for harm need to heed these words of warning ...

*“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil,
who put darkness for light and light for darkness,
who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.”*

(Isaiah 5:20)

What Is Substance Abuse?

- **Substance abuse** means the use of a chemical—legal or illegal—used to the extent of causing physical, mental, or emotional harm.
- **Substance abusers** are identified in five ways:
 1. **Experimental users** ... try drugs simply out of curiosity.
 2. **Recreational users** ... “get high” on drugs on special occasions (parties, celebrations).
 3. **Regular users** ... habitually abuse drugs, while attempting to live a “normal life.”
 4. **Binge users** ... abuse drugs uncontrollably for a brief period of time and then abstain until the next binge.
 5. **Dependent users** ... live emotionally, physically, and psychologically hooked on drugs. Their lives are continually obsessed with getting drugs because of their all-consuming addiction.

*“Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler;
whoever is led astray by them is not wise.”*

(Proverbs 20:1)

Discover a Chemical Dependency

- C —Do you ever attempt to *conceal* your habit from others?
- H —Do you ever think about *getting help* for your habit?
- E —Do you ever have problems at your place of *employment* because of your habit?
- M —Do you ever experience a loss of *memory* related to your habit?
- I —Do you ever become severely *intoxicated*?
- C —Do you ever feel unfairly *criticized* because of your habit?
- A —Do you ever feel your habit is *abnormal*?
- L —Do you ever *lose* friendships or *form* relationships as a result of your habit?
- L —Do you ever *lower* your intake but then return to your previous level of consumption?
- Y —Do you ever neglect your *young* ones or other loved ones because of your habit?
- D —Do you become *defensive* or argumentative about your use?
- E —Do you fail to get in touch with your *emotions* because of your use?
- P —Is your *physical* health affected by your use?
- E —Do you *enjoy* only functions where alcohol or other drugs are available?
- N —Is your *need* for the substance affecting your finances?
- D —Do you *deny* that you experience any consequences from your habit?
- E —Do you *evade* difficult situations by indulging in your habit?
- N —Is your *need* to feed your habit affecting your relationships?
- T —Is your *tolerance* level for the substance getting higher?

Influential Factors in Forming an Addiction

External Influences (family and social)

- **Family Environment** ... raised in a family where social drinking was acceptable.
- **Dysfunctional Family** ... family members used drugs.

- **Physical Problems** ... dependent on medication for pain relief, headaches, sleeplessness, or dieting.
- **Social Acceptance** ... given alcohol or drugs at various social functions.
- **Peer Pressure** ... seeking social acceptance from those drinking or using drugs.
- **Cultural Endorsement** ... continually exposed to alcohol through the media.

Internal Influences (genetic and psychological)

- **Inherited Inclination from Family** ... According to the American Psychiatric Association, the risk for alcohol dependence is 3 to 4 times higher for those who have close relatives with a dependence on alcohol.
- **Inherited Vulnerability from an Ethnic Group** ... Certain ethnic groups have a high rate of alcoholism.
- **Psychological Makeup** ... Some people are prone to seek drugs as a relief from anxiety or stress.
- **Emotional Makeup** ... Some people tend to drink or use drugs when angry, sad, or experiencing emotional pain.
- **Habits and Compulsions** ... Repetitive actions alter the brain itself where connections between neurons are slowly modified, thus making it more difficult to make different choices.

*“If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?
But if you do not do what is right,
sin is crouching at your door;
it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”*
(Genesis 4:7)

Deliverance from Dependency

- **Admit** you are powerless over your dependency. (2 Corinthians 1:9)
- **Realize** that the God, who made you and saved you, has the power to restore you. (Psalm 71:20–21)
- **Yield** your will to the will of the Lord. (Proverbs 3:5–6)
- **Face** reality—face your true self. (Psalm 139:23–24)
- **Admit** your struggle with sin, both to God and to someone else. (1 John 1:8)
- **Accept** God’s help to change your patterns of the past. (1 Peter 5:6–7)
- **Confess** your defects and daily failings. (Psalm 51:10–12)
- **Ask** forgiveness of those you have offended. (Matthew 5:23–24)

- **Make** restitution where you have wronged others. (Ezekiel 33:15–16)
- **Keep** a clean slate when you realize you have been wrong. (Titus 2:11–12)
- **Pray** to know God’s path for your life. (Psalm 25:4–5)
- **Reach** out to others with your hand and your heart. (Galatians 6:2)

Key Verse to Memorize

*“I am the LORD your God who takes hold
of your right hand and says to you,
Do not fear; I will help you.”*
(Isaiah 41:13)

Key Passage to Read

1 Corinthians chapter 10

Seven Don’ts for Deliverance

1. **Don’t** fight addiction on your own. Participate in a legitimate recovery program. (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10)
2. **Don’t** be blind about your ability to lie to yourself and to others! (Jeremiah 17:9)
3. **Don’t** socialize with those who encourage your habit. (1 Corinthians 15:33)
4. **Don’t** worry about the future. Walk with God one day at a time. (Matthew 6:34)
5. **Don’t** give up if you relapse. (1 John 1:9)
6. **Don’t** become prideful as you succeed in the recovery process. (Proverbs 16:18)
7. **Don’t** be surprised at temptation! (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Ten Spiritual Steps

1. **Decide**, the time to begin your recovery is today. (Hebrews 3:15)
2. **Realize**, recovery is a lifelong process, not a onetime event. (Philippians 3:12)
3. **Pray** daily for victory! (Matthew 26:41)
4. **Read** your Bible every day. (Psalm 119:28)
5. **Meditate** on Scripture. (Psalm 119:11)
6. **Attend** church every week. (Hebrews 10:24–25)
7. **Share** your struggles with caring loved ones. (James 5:16)

The Power of Prayer ... on Behalf of the One Addicted

8. **Have** confidence in God! Prioritize growing in your relationship with Him. (Matthew 6:33)
9. **Depend** on Christ's strength to stay drug free. (Philippians 4:13)
10. **Know** that permanent change is possible. (Matthew 19:26)

Set Beneficial Boundaries ... with the One Addicted

- **Give up** all expectations of the addict. (Psalm 62:5)
- **Learn** to detach from the addict's problem, and maintain control of your own life. (Psalm 25:15)
- **Shift** your focus from the addict's behavior to your responses. (Lamentations 3:40)
- **Learn** all you can about drug abuse. (Proverbs 16:16)
- **Stop** acts that are enabling, and hold your loved one accountable. (Ecclesiastes 4:10)
- **Let** the addict know the effects of the addiction on you and on others. (Ephesians 4:25)
- **Pray** for and expect God to bring consequences into the addict's life. (Proverbs 5:21)

- **Pray** with thanksgiving for what God has done for both you and your loved one. (Philippians 4:6-7)
- **Pray** for God to reveal any harmful responses on your part. (Psalm 51:6)
- **Pray** for a sincere love for the struggler and that both of you would love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. (Matthew 5:44; 22:37)
- **Pray** for strongholds to be broken and for the ground given to drugs to be reclaimed by God. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)
- **Pray** for faith that, with God, lasting change can occur and God will be glorified. (Mark 10:27)
- **Pray** for the struggler to be filled with the knowledge of God and to live a life worthy of Him and pleasing to Him. (Colossians 1:9-11)
- **Pray** with consistency and persistence, realizing the supernatural power of God is essential in the life of your loved one. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

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