

What Can You do to Help?

Many users may be resistant to any sort of therapy for reasons that may not be imaginable to the people around them. That is why if you notice a loved one is using or you suspect they are abusing narcotics, you should seek information and education for yourself first from a healthcare professional. Once you feel you have learned how to properly address the situation with your loved one, you should do so cautiously and with the understanding that it may take multiple attempts for you to successfully convince your loved one to seek help.

You should not press the issue by making the abuser feel like they have done something wrong or is doomed by their habit unless they get help. Instead, it is ideal to work toward facilitating your loved one to come to the understanding that they need help on their own.

Don't expect a dramatic shift in thinking or behavior right away; this conversation may be the first time your loved one has thought about this problem. And keep in mind that there is no quick fix – overcoming addiction is oftentimes a long journey. For more information about how to talk with a loved one you suspect is abusing narcotics, visit drugabuse.gov.

*Reference drugabuse.gov

Please dispose of your unused or expired medications safely.

Medication drop box sites:

City of Columbus Police Dept.
159 S. Ludington St., Columbus, (920) 623-5919

City of Portage Police Dept.
117 West Pleasant St., Portage, (608) 742-2174

Columbia Co. Law Enforcement Center
711 East Cook St., Portage, (608) 742-4166

City of Lodi Police Dept.
113 South Main St., Lodi, (608) 592-5401

Cambridge Police Department
200 South Spring Street, Cambridge, (608) 423-4328

Madison Police East District
809 South Thompson Drive, Madison, (608) 266-4887
Available 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

Deerfield Police Department
7 West Deerfield Street, Deerfield, (608) 764-5626

Sun Prairie Police Department
300 E. Main Street, Sun Prairie, (608) 837-7336

Waunakee Police Department
205 N. Klein Drive, Waunakee, (608) 849 4523
Available 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Monday-Friday

For more information regarding Project C.L.E.A.N. visit www.PrairieRidge.Health or call the Prairie Ridge Health at **920.623.1222**.

*Signs
a loved one
is abusing
and
How I
can help*

Project

C.L.E.A.N.

*Community Leaders Eliminating
the Abuse of Narcotics*

What is Project C.L.E.A.N.?

Project C.L.E.A.N. is a partnership between local community leaders (healthcare professionals, law enforcement, school officials and community members) to enhance awareness and understanding of narcotic use and abuse. This is accomplished through community education seminars that encourage open conversations about the safe use of narcotics.

Signs Your Loved One May be Abusing Narcotics

While symptoms and treatment of narcotic abuse vary from person to person, what remains similar are the signs that a loved one may be struggling with addiction. Not every individual suffering from addiction will show all of the following signs, but be aware if your loved one is to show one or a combination of them.

Being secretive or evasive. The first step to recovery is admitting you have a problem, right? Well, those suffering from addiction will go to great lengths to hide their addiction. This can include avoiding clear answers to your questions, keeping secrets or acting in unusual manners.

Lying frequently. Going along with the first sign in keeping secrets or avoiding questions, individuals struggling with addiction will flat out lie to you to protect themselves from admitting their addiction.

Mood swings. Noticeable fluctuations in mood can be a result of a psychiatric disorder often affiliated with addiction or based on the substance abused. Some illicit drugs trigger different emotions and the amount of the substance abused and frequency of abuse can trigger major mood swings.

Major changes in sleep or energy levels. Very similar to mood swings, drug addiction can play a major role in an addict's energy levels. The substance abused can play a pertinent role on whether an individual expresses intense amounts of energy, or expresses a type of melancholy depression paired with drowsiness or excessive sleep patterns.

Fluctuations in weight. Many substances have a direct correlation to metabolism and appetite; therefore, an individual struggling from drug addiction may suffer from severe weight gain or loss. Eating disorders are also a form of a psychiatric disorder that can happen in tandem to a drug addiction—a dual diagnosis.

Attitude and appearance changes. Much like fluctuations in weight, when an individual is struggling with addiction they often change their way of living, including the way in which they dress, carry themselves and treat others. Substance abuse can trigger an abundance of moods and actions such as, aggression, apprehension, shortness with others, etc. Drug abuse generally makes an individual think about life differently, therefore sparking a different way of living it.

Loss of interest in things they used to enjoy. Drug addiction consumes a large part of an individual's life, which in turn gives them little time to continue the hobbies they used to enjoy. If you notice a loved one no longer wants to spend time with their family and friends or stops participating in activities they normally would have, drug addiction may be the case.

Failing to meet obligations. When an individual is entrapped by addiction it overtakes their rational thinking; including, meeting deadlines, going to work, finishing tasks, etc. A major sign of drug addiction is when an individual who you would normally see as responsible and driven starts to fail in meeting commitments because they seem to no longer care.

Loss of memory. If you and your loved ones are reminiscing of good times and one member doesn't participate in the conversation due to lack of memory, or your loved one forgets to meet obligations, a drug addiction may be causing a loss in memory. Substance abuse often causes blackouts from heavy usage in a small window of time. The more blackouts an individual undergoes, the more longtime memory loss that individual may suffer.

Stealing. If you start to notice things of value or money disappearing around the house, a common explanation is an individual in your family is struggling with addiction. Addicts will do anything to feed their next high, and that includes stealing from the ones they love just to buy drugs.

If you recognize one or a combination of these signs in one of your loved ones, the next step may be to confront the addiction with an intervention. An addict may not realize that they have a problem with alcohol and drug abuse, or the addiction has entrapped their rational thinking to where they no longer want to stop using.