

What is Substance Abuse Treatment?

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Substance abuse is not a weakness but a treatable disease from which you can recover. As an illness, it can affect anyone: whether you are young or old, rich or poor, male or female, employed or unemployed, and any race or ethnicity.

One of the first warning signs of substance abuse is when you continue to use drugs or alcohol even after a very serious incident related to your drug or alcohol use. You may not own up to the consequences of your behavior. This is known as being in denial about your drug or alcohol use. Other symptoms of drug or alcohol abuse include:

- **Tolerance** - Needing more and more of the drugs or alcohol to get high
- **Cravings** - An uncontrollable need to use drugs or alcohol
- **Loss of control** - Taking more drugs or alcohol than you mean to take
- **Physical withdrawal** - Nausea, sweating, shakiness, extreme anxiety that can occur when you stop taking drugs or alcohol

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When you first enter substance abuse treatment, you receive a complete assessment to help determine what type of treatment will work best for you. Once your counselor gathers all the information they need in the assessment, they work with you to develop your own personal treatment plan. Your treatment plan should include your personal issues, your treatment goals and how you are going to achieve those goals.

The first step prior to starting treatment is to withdraw from using drugs or alcohol, called detoxification, also known as detox. You may receive medically supervised detox, which uses medication to help you withdraw from drugs or alcohol. Medically supervised detox can happen in a hospital, in a special inpatient unit or on an outpatient basis. Depending on your situation, you may attend a residential treatment center for social detoxification which usually does not involve medication.

Once you have stopped using drugs or alcohol, you are ready to begin treatment. Drug and alcohol abuse treatment can happen in a variety of settings.

- **Inpatient treatment:** usually provided in a special hospital unit or medical clinic
- **Residential program:** a living environment where you become part of the treatment community
- **Partial hospitalization or day treatment:** you live at home but attend a program four to eight hours a day in a hospital or clinic
- **Outpatient and intensive outpatient program:** a condensed program that allows participants to attend school or work during treatment

- Methadone clinic: an outpatient setting that uses medication to help patients not use opioid drugs

What Happens in Treatment?

Although treatment programs differ, the basic elements of treatment are similar. Most programs include many or all of the following:

- Assessment
- Medical care
- A treatment plan
- Group and individual counseling
- Individual assignments (reading, listening, etc)
- Education about substance abuse disorders
- Life skills training
- Testing for drugs and alcohol use
- Relapse prevention training
- Orientation to self-help groups
- Treatment for behavioral health disorders
- Family education and counseling services
- Medication
- Follow-up care (also called continuing care)

Substance abuse develops over a period of time and can take a long time to treat. It's more than just stopping the drug or alcohol abuse. It's about learning new ways to cope you're your daily life, how to manage emotions and social situation without using drugs or alcohol. It takes time to see the problem and become motivated to change, so it is important to stay with it.

Resources Are Available

Additional information, self-help tools and other resources are available online at www.MagellanHealth.com/member. If you have any questions about your program services, please call your program toll-free number at 800-888-3773.