

What are the complications of addiction?

Addiction is a complicated disease involving an inability to stop taking a substance or carrying out a particularly damaging behavior. It can lead to a range of adverse psychological, physiological, and personal effects.

The complications of [addiction](#) often depend on the type of substance or behavior. Sex addiction, for example, greatly increases the risk of sexual behaviors that could lead to [sexually transmitted diseases](#) (STDs).

Injecting intravenous (IV) drugs using non-sterilized needles can lead to the transmission of [hepatitis C](#), [HIV](#), and other harmful infections.

It is very often not one type of complication that disrupts the daily the life of a person with addiction. These factors often feed each other and work in tandem to create health risks.

Physical complications



Overdosing can lead to a life-threatening medical emergency.

Overusing mood- or physiology-altering substances can cause

damage in a number of ways.

Direct effects of substances: For example, snorting cocaine through the nose can damage nasal cartilage, and taking opiates can lead to opiate-induced [constipation](#), a chronic and potentially fatal form of constipation if a person does not receive treatment.

Regular tobacco use can cause a range of [cancers](#) and smoking methamphetamine might fuel a severe form of dental decay known as “meth mouth”.

Injury: This can occur during the administration of a drug, depending on the method. For example, injecting heroin with a needle can lead to skin and muscle damage at the point of injection, and many people take drugs by smoking, causing lung damage and respiratory illnesses.

Injury can also occur while intoxicated. Often, drug use impairs co-ordination and balance and can lead to falls and injuries. Driving while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs is criminal in most countries and caused [28 percent](#) of all deaths related to traffic across the United States in 2016.

Some substances induce violent reactions in people and increase the likelihood of risky or confrontational behaviors.
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Overdose: Taking too much of one substance or mixing substances together can result in an overdose. While this can also occur with medications and pharmaceuticals, it is more likely to occur in a person who takes a substance to alter their mood or for recreational purposes.

An overdose can result in [coma](#) and death. On average, [115 people](#) in the United States die every day by overdosing on opioid painkillers.

Cardiovascular health: Many substances lead to spikes in [blood pressure](#) and heart rate, placing strain on the heart and blood vessels and increasing the risk of [stroke](#), [heart attack](#), and death.

Loss of hygiene and routine: Addiction can become an all-encompassing feature in a person's life, and reward systems in the brain can rewire to prioritize the substance or behavior at the root of the addiction over [nutrition](#), resolving stressful situations, and hygiene.

Addiction can also mean that a person dedicates large sums of money each month to obtaining the substance, increasing the risk of poor nutrition.

In some cases, addiction can lead to homelessness, greatly reducing protection and resources and increasing exposure to the elements.

Fetal damage: If a woman takes substances while pregnant, this can lead to congenital anomalies or even death in the fetus.

Psychological complications

Drugs have a two-way relationship with [mental health](#). Mental health issues, such as [depression](#) and [anxiety](#), might occur ahead of addiction.

However, drug use can also set off the symptoms of these conditions as well as causing them to develop when they were not present before.

Addiction not only impairs a range of bodily functions but also changes the way a person thinks. Drug use alters how some brain circuits work.

Psychoactive substances: Many drugs directly cause hallucinations and longer-term psychological effects that can lead to severe mental health problems.

Excessive use of LSD, for example, might result in a slipping handle on reality and drug-induced [psychosis](#).

Depression: A [2014 study](#) linked lifetime use of a number of different substances to increased levels of depression.

Anxiety, restlessness, guilt, and shame can also result from prolonged substance dependency and behavioral addiction.

Loneliness: People with addiction tend to push away the people

closest to them and this removes or drastically reduces an individual's support network when they need it the most.

This can fuel further drug use and push people with addiction towards the more severe complications.

Adverse circumstances: Drug addiction might lead people to financial problems, homelessness, criminal activity, and prison. Deteriorating personal circumstances increase [stress](#) levels, depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions.

Suicide: A [2015 study](#) showed that six times as many people who regularly misuse opiates attempt suicide as people who do not misuse opiates. The rate of death by suicide was two to three times higher in people who had a dependency on opiates.

People use certain drugs as a way to attempt suicide, such as heroin. When the effects of the drugs themselves combine with resulting or underlying psychological difficulties, the results can be lethal. [What are the treatments for addiction? Click here to find out about treatments that can break the cycle of addiction. READ NOW](#)

Personal complications



A substance disorder can make a person feel isolated, which might fuel further drug use and impact on relationships.

Addiction can change relationships to the people closest to the person with the condition. These can compound the effects of addiction on the brain and body.

Relationships: Often, obtaining the substance or enacting the behavior at the root of an addiction supplants obligations to other people, even family and dependents.

Finances: Not only can the costs of regularly purchasing substances or pursuing behavioral impulses mount up, but addiction can also drive a person further and further from their place of employment and financial responsibilities. This can lead to difficulties that further compound the other health issues that can arise from addiction.

Crime: Many psychoactive substances are illicit, and even possessing them can put a person in jail. However, people may also resort to crime to fund drug misuse, especially as drug addiction can lead to unemployment as the substance or behavior starts to replace personal responsibilities.

Takeaway

Addiction carries with it a range of dangerous complications that can greatly impact the life of a person with the disease and the people around them.

Psychoactive substances often carry a range of toxic and destructive physical effects, such as the risk of physical damage, the side effects of the drugs or behaviors themselves,

cardiovascular diseases including stroke and heart attack, and reduced nutritional intake.

Taking too much of a substance can also lead to overdose and death.

Addiction can also trigger depression, psychosis, and anxiety, and greatly increase the risk of suicidal ideation. It can also deeply impair people around the individual, destroying relationships and finances, and even pushing people towards illicit activity and crime.

(Source: www.Medicalnewstoday.com)