

# Have You Wondered if Alcoholism is Genetic?

Alcoholism. A somewhat commonly used term, yet there is still a lot of mystery and stigma surrounding it. It is not uncommon to hear an alcoholic in recovery speak of being raised by an alcoholic. You might also hear sober folks share about relatives who are still active in their alcoholism. Such talk can make you wonder if genetics play a role. You may be asking, is being an alcoholic genetic? The answer is maybe. It is common to find more than one person in a family who has faced addiction and alcoholism. However, there are just as many people facing alcoholism and addiction without a genetic link. At Evolve Indy, we're here to help you address your problem with alcohol, whether there is a genetic link or not.

## If I Have Alcoholic Family Members, Does That Put Me at a Greater Risk for Alcoholism?

While researchers have found a genetic component to alcoholism, they have also found that environmental factors play a role. The answer to is being an alcohol genetic is complicated. A genetic component makes one more susceptible to becoming an alcoholic, but that gene does not guarantee that you will become an alcoholic. Research that has studied identical and fraternal twins have proven that having the gene does not always result in active alcoholism. But what are environmental factors in alcoholism?

Environmental factors in alcoholism range from a person's temperament to their biological reaction to drinking alcohol to the age at which they begin drinking alcohol. Exposure to trauma, being raised by a parent with a substance use disorder, or experiencing other adverse events in childhood, can also increase the risk for developing alcoholism. So, while yes, having an alcoholic family member can increase your risk for developing alcoholism, it may not always be genetics. It also depends on the role of that person in your life and your relationship with them. It also depends on your genetic make-up and the events that occur in your life.

## What Are the Signs That I'm an Alcoholic?

Many of the signs of alcoholism, or alcohol use disorder, are related to the effects of drinking alcohol. A quick search of the Internet or a visit to your physician's office will bring you to a list of questions such as the following. In the past year, have you:

- Had times when you ended up drinking more or longer than you intended?
- Wanted to cut down on your drinking and could not?
- Continued to drink even though it was causing problems with family or friends?
- Continued to drink even though it was contributing to a health problem?
- Found that drinking – or being sick after drinking – interfered with taking care of your responsibilities?
- Continued to drink even after experiencing legal problems from drinking?

The questions above and more are meant to help you highlight how your use of alcohol impacts your life and that of others in your life. Typically, the more questions that result in a "yes" answer, the greater the possibility that you have an alcohol problem.

## How to Get Help With an Alcohol Addiction

At Evolve Indy, we have programs to meet your needs no matter what the factors that led up to your alcoholism. Whether you need extra support to get sober or are coming back from a relapse, we're here. We care about your success in recovery. We have a wide variety of addiction treatment programs that blend traditional and non-traditional therapies to treat alcoholism and addiction. Our programs range from residential to outpatient, and we will work with you to find the best fit for you. Contact us today to see how we can best support you in your journey to sobriety.

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