

How Is Substance And Drug Abuse Use Disorder Diagnosed?

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Like any other addiction issue, a Substance Abuse Use Disorder diagnosis is not as straightforward as some people expect. While it is usually clear to see the signs of substance abuse, the attempts to diagnose always depend on the person with the addiction issue or those close to them who are willing and ready to acknowledge the problem and [seek help](#). However, how is substance abuse disorder diagnosed? This article sheds more light on the topic.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCATH9d9D_s

What is Substance and Drug Abuse Use Disorder?

Substance abuse use disorder is a progressive disease that makes a person lose control over using substances, despite the evidence of worsening consequences due to the prolonged use of the substance.

It is important to note that substance abuse use disorder can be a life-threatening condition. This condition is also not a problem of a lack of morality or willpower. Like other forms of addiction, it is more complex than most people think, and an addict cannot simply quit, even if they wanted to. This is because regular use of drugs affects the brain, making it extremely challenging to stop mentally and physically. Treating substance abuse disorder use or any other addiction issue often requires the right therapy. This may include [partial hospitalization](#) and lifelong care. It all begins with an accurate diagnosis.

How is Substance and Drug Abuse Use Disorder Diagnosed?

As indicated earlier, the first step to diagnosing substance abuse use disorder relies on the person with the addiction acknowledging they need help or caring for friends, relatives, and loved ones seeking [assistance](#).



Diagnosing substance abuse use considers four main criteria. These are:

- **Impaired control:** An addict loses control over their ability to quit using the substances even when they want to. But it also indicates the tendency to use these substances in more significant amounts than they control and for more extended periods than necessary.

Moreover, people have impaired control when they can't stop overspending to feed their addiction and uncontrollable cravings.

- **Social impairment:** An addict continues to use the substance despite its adverse effects on their social life, for example, losing their jobs, having problems with schooling, inability to meet their social or family obligations, etc. Substance abuse can also be indicated by a person's inability to stop using the substance despite the interpersonal problems it comes with, for example, constantly arguing with those around them, losing loved ones, friends, family, and other healthy relationships, etc.
- **Risky usage:** An addict falls into the dangerous usage criteria when they find it difficult to refrain from using the substance despite the harm it causes them or the threat to their lives. Also, when a person continues to use the substance in dangerous environments (like when driving or operating a machine), they meet the risky usage criteria.
- **Pharmacological indicators:** This covers anything that indicates advanced addiction. It focuses on the adjustments the person's body makes to adapt to the excessive use of the substance. That is usually referred to as maintaining homeostatic balance.

A person does not need to meet all the above criteria to diagnose substance abuse use disorder. In most cases, meeting just two of the requirements should be more than enough.

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