

# Why Are Drugs So Addictive?

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Struggling with drug addiction, or watching a loved one do so, is a heart-wrenching experience. Addicts can't seem to help themselves and will continue with their addiction despite all the negative consequences they face.

Sometimes, addiction is viewed as a choice or a moral problem. Non-addicted people often find it hard to understand why those who are addicted can't just stop taking drugs or addictive substances. However, beating addiction involves a lot more than just deciding to stop taking the drug. It needs a complete overhaul of the individual's life. This is because addiction is a disease and drugs change how the brain works.



## The Brain on Drugs

To understand why drugs are so addictive, we first have to understand how they affect the brain. Drugs are said to hijack the brain and change 3 key functions. They:

- **Change the brain's pleasure/reward circuits**

Whenever we do or experience something pleasurable, the pleasure sensors in the brain release dopamine. This is a hormone that is associated with pleasurable sensations. Drugs can also stimulate this hormone's release, producing the same pleasurable feeling. As more drugs are used, the brain becomes dependent on the dopamine hits. As more of the drug is taken, the brain becomes tolerant and keeps requiring more quantities to keep achieving the same high. Slowly, chronic drug use becomes an addiction.

- **Change how the brain interprets danger**

At the same time, drugs also change the emotional danger-sensing circuits in the brain. These are the areas of the brain that warn us of danger and prepare us to deal with it. Whenever an addict fails to take drugs, these circuits become activated, making the individual anxious and stressed. This also leads to unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. At this point, instead of the individual taking drugs to get high, they do it to keep from experiencing unpleasant effects.

- **Damage to the decision-making center of the brain**

Another reason it's so hard to beat addiction is that drugs damage the prefrontal cortex. This area of the brain is associated with the decision-making process. Once damaged, the individual's ability to recognize the harm in taking drugs becomes impaired and they continue their habit, regardless of any consequences they experience.

## Addiction Treatment in Indiana

The good news is that with the right help and treatment, people can beat addiction and turn their lives around.

At [Evolve Indy in Indiana](#), we have different addiction specialists with years of experience helping drug addicts to conquer addiction. We offer a range of drug addiction treatment programs ranging from inpatient and [partial hospitalization programs](#) to [intensive outpatient](#) and [outpatient treatment programs](#). We also encourage families to participate in our [family therapy programs](#) to learn more about addiction and to create a positive environment for their loved one to continue living clean.

Contact us today if you wish to know more about our drug addiction treatment programs and facility.

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