

Is Drug Addiction A Disease?

by Evolve Indy | Dec 16, 2021 | Blog | 0 comments



Many people are surprised to learn that addiction is a disease. **Drug addiction** is a disease comparable to heart disease or diabetes.

If you've watched your loved one struggling with drug addiction, you've most likely wondered why they can't just stop taking the addictive substance. Over the years, many have wondered the same, leading to the misconception that addiction occurs because of the lack of willpower to act or a lack of morals.

This isn't true.

Research and studies have revealed that addiction is a chronic disease. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), addiction is a condition that is characterized by repetitive and compulsive drug use despite adverse consequences. The person often has no control over their behavior and will keep taking drugs despite losing their job and ruining their friendships, homes, and families.

Why is drug addiction considered a disease?

How is drug addiction a disease?

- **It causes changes in the body.** The most noticeable changes brought about by addiction are in the brain. Taking drugs leads to changes in the reward center of the brain, leading to tolerance and constant cravings for the drug. Additionally, drug addiction changes the prefrontal cortex of the brain, impairing an individual's ability to make decisions. That is why those who are addicted find it hard to quit using.
- **The long-term effects of addiction persist long after an individual stops using drugs.** Like any disease, drug addiction has effects on the body. These effects don't disappear once drug use is halted. It may take years for some of the effects to continue being felt.
- **Addiction to drugs has clear symptoms.** Like other diseases, drug addiction presents noticeable symptoms including:
 - Impaired control- where a person keeps craving drugs and has tried to stop using but is unable to.
 - Risky drug use – the individual takes drugs in risky settings and also doesn't care about the negative consequences of their addiction
 - Social problems –most of those battling drug addiction have run into problems at work or school or with their friends and loved ones.
 - Drug effects – drug addiction leads to tolerance and also withdrawal.
- **Drug addiction leads to a decreased quality of life.** Without intervention, continued drug addiction leads to an increased risk of premature death. Aside from that, it leads to poor quality of life where the individual is fixated on the next fix or high.

Help Is Available

If you, or your loved one, are struggling with drug addiction, the right care and treatment can turn things around. At Evolve Indy, we pride ourselves on offering individualized drug addiction treatment whether you attend our **partial hospitalization** or **intensive outpatient program**. Our programs are offered on both an inpatient and **outpatient program basis**. We also have a **family therapy program** for the families of those dealing with addiction.

Don't allow drug addiction to continue ruining your life, get in contact with us today and get started on your recovery.

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