# What is Addiction

An addiction is a chronic dysfunction of the brain system that involves reward, motivation, and memory. It’s about the way your body craves a substance or behavior, especially if it causes a compulsive or obsessive pursuit of “reward” and lack of concern over consequences.

Someone experiencing an addiction will:

* be unable stay away from the substance or stop the addictive behavior
* display a lack of self-control
* have an increased desire for the substance or behavior
* dismiss how their behavior may be causing problems
* lack an emotional response

Over time, addictions can seriously interfere with your daily life. People experiencing addiction are also prone to cycles of relapse and remission. This means they may cycle between intense and mild use. Despite these cycles, addictions will typically worsen over time. They can lead to permanent health complications and serious consequences like bankruptcy.

## Drug Addiction

Drug addiction, also called substance use disorder, is a disease that affects a person's brain and behavior and leads to an inability to control the use of a legal or illegal drug or medication. Substances such as alcohol, marijuana and nicotine also are considered drugs. When you're addicted, you may continue using the drug despite the harm it causes.

Drug addiction can start with experimental use of a recreational drug in social situations, and, for some people, the drug use becomes more frequent. For others, particularly with opioids, drug addiction begins with exposure to prescribed medications, or receiving medications from a friend or relative who has been prescribed the medication.

The risk of addiction and how fast you become addicted varies by drug. Some drugs, such as opioid painkillers, have a higher risk and cause addiction more quickly than others.

As time passes, you may need larger doses of the drug to get high. Soon you may need the drug just to feel good. As your drug use increases, you may find that it's increasingly difficult to go without the drug. Attempts to stop drug use may cause intense cravings and make you feel physically ill (withdrawal symptoms).

You may need help from your doctor, family, friends, support groups or an organized treatment program to overcome your drug addiction and stay drug-free.

## Non - Chemical Addictions