

Substance Use & Addiction

Overview:

Substance use involves consuming alcohol, drugs, or other addictive behaviors. Addiction develops when repeated use leads to dependence, causing physical, psychological, and social problems.

Symptoms:

- Increased tolerance and withdrawal symptoms.
- Compulsive desire to use substances despite negative consequences.
- Neglecting responsibilities and relationships.
- Mood swings, irritability, or depression.

Causes:

- Peer pressure or social influence.
- Stress, academic burnout, or emotional trauma.
- Genetic predisposition to addiction.
- Coping mechanism for anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem.

Effects:

- Health deterioration: liver, heart, brain, and immune system issues.
- Academic or work decline.
- Legal, financial, and social problems.
- Increased risk of accidents and mental health disorders.

Coping Strategies:

- **Professional Treatment:** Rehabilitation programs, therapy, medical support.
- **Behavioral Therapy:** CBT or motivational interviewing to reduce dependence.
- **Support Groups:** Peer groups like AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) or NA (Narcotics Anonymous).
- **Healthy Alternatives:** Physical exercise, hobbies, and social engagement.
- **Relapse Prevention:** Identify triggers and develop coping strategies.

Extra Tips:

- Maintain a structured daily routine.

- Seek family and social support to encourage recovery.
- Avoid high-risk situations or substance-using peers.

Case Example:

A student using alcohol to cope with stress started missing classes and failing exams. After entering a counseling program, joining a peer support group, and practicing yoga and exercise, their dependency decreased, and academic performance improved.