

Symptoms of Addiction

Chemical Dependency

1. Deterioration of relationships, including such things as avoidance of activities, refusal to accept responsibilities at home, etc.
2. Noticable changes in personal preferences and interests such as sudden interest in distasteful music, books, and movies, or changes in clothing style, make-up, or hair.
3. Negative personality changes such as no motivation, depression, or “conning” behavior, and unpredictable mood swings.
4. Deterioration in school performance and other school activities.
5. Physical changes, including frequent sore throat, cough, red eyes, etc.
6. Legal problems, including missing money at home, shoplifting, vandalism, and traffic problems.
7. Negative changes in peer group. Two things drive nearly all addictions—lack of connectedness and shame.

Alcoholism

1. Physical dependency manifested by withdrawal symptoms when consumption is interrupted. This might include anxiety and physical trembling from 8-12 hours after withdrawal, irritability, gastrointestinal upset, and vague discomfort. Those with more advanced cases of alcoholism may experience grand mal seizures, mild hallucinations, and delirium tremens (d.t.’s), and should immediately seek medical attention.
 2. Diminished ability to function in an appropriate manner socially or occupationally.
 3. Tolerance to the desired effects of alcohol; more and more must be consumed to produce the desired “high,” state of relaxation, etc.
 4. Continued drinking despite serious medical complications or indications.
 5. Alcohol-associated illnesses: cirrhosis of the liver, brain degeneration or chronic brain syndrome affection thought functions, gastritis, hepatitis, blood coagulation disorders, neuropathy, and for infants of alcoholic women, fetal alcohol syndrome (low birth weight, mental retardation, and birth defects.)
 6. Need for alcohol on a daily basis in order to function, or drinking early in the morning.
 7. Inability to stop drinking despite repeated efforts.
 8. Blackouts.
 9. Unpleasant physical signs such as alcoholic breath, flushed face, tremor, or injuries of a vague origin.
- At least one month’s duration of three or more of the above.

