

THE ALCOHOL DEMON

What is alcohol addiction ?

You are starting to get addicted or dependent if you have lost control over alcohol and any of the following symptoms are present:

- You experience problems at work because of drinking
- You cannot find employment due to alcohol
- Your home life becomes unhappy
- You drink alcohol to feel more confident
- You harm your good reputation due to drinking
- You feel guilty about your drinking
- You experience financial problems because of alcohol
- You spend too much money on alcohol
- You borrow money to buy alcohol
- You buy at different bottle stores
- You drive long distances to buy alcohol
- You mix with lower class people when you drink
- You buy alcohol before you buy groceries
- You drive when you have drunk alcohol
- You crave alcohol at certain times of the day
- You drink alcohol in the morning to ease hangover, eg. a beer
- Your sleep pattern changes as you wake up in the middle of the night
- You drink to relax or to handle stress
- You prefer to drink alone
- You cannot remember everything that happened during drinking session
- You need medical assistance due to alcohol
- You need alcohol to tackle a difficult task
- You cannot stop drinking after the first drink
- You show withdrawal symptoms like nausea, tremor, anxiety, sweating, etc.
- You need more liquor to get drunk
- You promise to drink less but drink more
- You stay out all night to drink
- You get angry when people say you drink too much
- Your neglect hygiene and clothes
- You eat little or nothing if you drink
- You hide alcohol
- You drink in a reckless manner
- You do not attend functions if there is no alcohol available
- You swallow the first drink fast
- You neglect religion
- Your eyes and face are red because of drinking
- You deny that you have a drinking problem and refuse to talk about it
- You are looking for excuses and justifications to drink
- You force others to drink with you

You change the type of beverage in the hope that you will drink less
You isolate yourself from other people
You make sure you have enough alcohol in stock
You tell lies about your drinking
You often smell of alcohol

Is alcohol addiction a disease ?

Yes, the chemicals in alcohol change your brain cells and you become allergic to alcohol, you cannot drink socially. It is a chronic disease that you will have for life. Medical aids pay for treatment because addiction is a DSM disorder.

Can you inherit addiction?

Genetically addiction is probably not inherited, but your chances of becoming addicted are 40 % to 60 % higher if you grow up in a family environment where alcohol is abused by role models.

Can addiction be cured ?

No, medically speaking addiction cannot be cured, but many dependents overcome addiction with the help of Jesus Christ, treatment, counsellors, sponsors, an aftercare recovery plan, support groups and now lead a happy life without alcohol.

Can treatment for addiction be successful ?

Yes, definitely, but dependents need to change their lifestyles and practice to be happy without substances. They must accept that they cannot use alcohol in a social way and they must do new, exciting things to fill the place previously taken by alcohol. They should be open and proud about their victory but must always remain humble. Aftercare groups such as CAD help them to learn new skills and make new friends who understand what they are going through. Family members and friends should also attend such groups to learn how to understand and support better.

What can family members learn about addiction?

How can I stop feeling guilty and blame myself for the addiction?
Should I throw out his alcohol?
How can I motivate him to quit drinking?
How do I handle his moods and dishonesty?
What is "Tough love" and how do I implement it?
How do I handle him when he relapses?
How do I confront him?
May I have a drink myself?
Should I divorce or leave him?

Should I hide the car keys when he drinks?

How do I deal with a crisis?

How can I stop trying to protect him?

Where do I get help?

How can I enjoy normal life while he is drinking?

How can I help our children to live a normal life?

What do I do if he acts irresponsibly?

How can we celebrate birthdays and other celebrations?

Must his colleagues, friends, pastor and doctor be informed of his addiction?

May there still be alcohol in the house?

Do only substance dependents have problems with alcohol?

No, you do not have to be addicted to alcohol to abuse it. Alcohol abuse can lead to serious problems at work, drunk driving accidents, medical problems and strained relationships.

Am I addicted if I enjoy a drink every night?

No, not if you have one drink and maintain control. Test yourself to see if you can skip drinking some evenings. Addiction can strike quickly without you realising it or being planned. A disease can hit anyone.

Are there different types of alcoholics?

Yes, weekend dependents get drunk every weekend , periodic dependents occasionally have a drinking episode of a few days or weeks , functional alcoholics continue like nothing is wrong but they are often drunk, some get drunk once in a while, others get drunk every day.

What is a social drinker?

Someone who retains control over alcohol without any adverse effects.

Can dependents stop drinking without treatment?

Yes, some can because it is a decision that must be taken by the person himself and it is possible. However, it is much easier if you join a support group such as CAD. Many dependents need professional help to stop drinking because alcohol changed their brain cells and personalities.

Are there dependents who cannot stop drinking?

Yes, if the brain damage is permanent and severe those clients should be admitted to a psychiatric institution.

Are certain groups are more prone to addiction?

Yes, if alcohol abuse is part of the group or community 's way of life, the chance of addiction is much higher.

What is denial?

Denial is when there are clear signs of addiction, but the person is still denying that he had lost control. Denial is the biggest obstacle to recovery.

Is the family to be blamed if someone becomes addicted?

No, drinking is a choice and you cannot force anyone to drink. Dependents are excellent manipulators and easily blame others/circumstances for the addiction.

What are defense mechanisms?

Substance dependents usually use the following defense mechanisms :

Negation: I do not drink so much

Excuses: I must always celebrate or forget something

Rationalization: I have many other problems that make me drink

Projection: It is other people 's fault that I drink

Denial: I do not drink too much

Threats: If you do not stop complaining , I will drink more

Closure: I refuse to talk about this any longer

Displacement: Rather focus on all my other problems

Justification: Jesus made wine, so wine is not a problem

Can I force him to stop drinking?

No, he must decide to stop. But you can do a lot to help him make the decision like committal by the court, job loss, divorce, relocation, sell house, no food for no work, he must sleep outside, talking with CAD-member, professional help, attending support groups, lay charges if he steals or is a nuisance, exclude him from family activities, sleeping in another room, forbid all contact with loved ones, solitary confinement, imprisonment, pray for and with him, etc. He must face the consequences of his addiction, not you. Do not lend money to him if he has spent all his money on alcohol.

Which intervention is the best?

A panel confrontation is a very effective intervention. The panel may consist of children, spouse, family, employer, doctor, counsellor, CAD members, minister, etc. CAD has articles and exercises regarding intervention.

What do I do if my child is experimenting with alcohol?

Parents should set a good example by drinking responsibly. Give your child the correct information about alcohol from a young age. Do not preach or threaten. Build your child's confidence by praising good behaviour. Teach your child to distinguish between good and bad friends. Determine the house rules and punishments when rules are broken. Be fair and consequent with punishment. Explain the illness of a parent's addiction and that it is not the child's fault. Spend quality time and do exciting things with your child. Let your child suffer the consequences of wrong decisions he has taken. Get professional help or attend CAD groups or Naranon if your child shows signs

of addiction.

What does a child do if his parents abuse alcohol?

Contact organizations like CAD, CAB, AA, Alateen, Badisa, ACVV Childline or talk to an adult who you can trust. You can also tell your parents how much you love him and how much it hurts you if they drink too much.

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