Drug addiction is a chronic disease, meaning it is long-lasting. People who struggle with addiction typically experience three stages of disease:

1. **Abuse**
   - Occurs in roughly 10% of the general population.
   - People who struggle with addiction may still function well at work or school despite their drug use.

2. **Dependence**
   - Occurs in roughly 2% of the general population.
   - Addiction changes the brain.

3. **Harmful Use**
   - Occurs in roughly 0.2% of the general population.
   - Addiction is a disease, not a weakness. People of all ages, classes, and ethnicities can get an addiction.

Patients and families may not want to go to treatment. They may not want to deal with the shame or stigma of addiction. They may not see the need to change.

It changes the brain.

There are always ways to help yourself or your loved one.

**PROFESSIONALS CAN HELP**

- **Primary care physicians**
- **Addiction specialists**

There are 13,339 addiction treatment facilities in the U.S. Go to www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

**TREATMENT WORKS**

The person has thought of the pros and cons of their substance use but is not sure about quitting.

The person has decided to change and is working to prevent a relapse.

Precontemplation:

- The person sees no need to change.

Contemplation:

- The person has thought of the pros and cons of their substance use but is not sure about quitting.

Preparation:

- The person is beginning to take action.

Action:

- The person is attempting to change and is working to prevent a relapse.

Maintenance:

- The person has changed and is working to prevent a relapse.

Relapse:

- The person may relapse once or several times before changing their pattern.

Three Stages

- Abuse
- Dependence
- Harmful Use

**DO I HAVE AN ADDICTION?**

There are online tests to help you do a self-assessment. The tests are free and confidential. You can take one today.

**SOURCES**


**JUST LIKE**

Cancer; Diabetes; Heart Disease; Obesity; Smoking; Drug Abuse, Addiction, and the Brain: WebMD Medical Reference; National Institute of Drug Abuse; www.addiction411.com; Published: October 1999 Revised: April 2009 Author: National Institute on Drug Abuse; NIDA’

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