

**Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)** - With MAT, doctors provide medications that can ease withdrawal symptoms, control cravings, or even create an uncomfortable reaction if the recovering individual drinks or uses drugs. MAT is often used to treat addiction to opiates like heroin or prescription drugs, alcohol, and even nicotine. MAT is most successful when it is combined with outpatient counseling.

**Intensive Outpatient Therapy (IOP)/ Partial Hospitalization (PT)** - These options provide many of the same services as residential treatment, but clients don't spend the night in the treatment center. Just like with traditional outpatient counseling, IOP/PT clients continue living at home, driving to and from therapy. To build a solid foundation for sobriety, IOP/PT clients often attend appointments several times a week, with appointments lasting several hours at a time.

**Outpatient Counseling (OP)** - This treatment can take place in the community, a treatment center, or a hospital. It is provided by trained professionals who work to stop substance use in their clients. In outpatient therapy, clients talk about what led them to addiction, while developing a plan for recovery. With the help of a therapist, clients learn the skills needed to stay sober. Outpatient counseling can be Individual, where a person works with a therapist one-on-one; or Group, where several clients meet with a therapist to work on their recovery together.

**What do I do if I can't afford the treatment that I need?** Worrying about how to pay for drug and alcohol addiction services can keep many people from getting the help that they or their loved-ones need. Most insurance companies will pay for treatment. For those with little or no insurance coverage, public funding options are available.

**For more information on addiction and recovery, or for help finding a treatment provider, dial:**

**2-1-1**

or

**1-800-468-4357**



*The Four County*  
**ADAMhs Board**

Four County Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services

# Addiction

**Information on the signs and symptoms of addiction, and the treatments that lead to recovery.**



**What is addiction?** Drug and alcohol use is a major health problem, especially for those who become addicted. Addiction is a powerful disease that causes a person to crave and use drugs or alcohol. For some people addiction develops slowly through regular use over time, and for others it can occur quickly. Often when a person is addicted they will use drugs or alcohol, even when doing so causes serious problems. Problems related to addiction can include:

**Legal Problems** - People who struggle with addiction often have problems with the law. Many drugs are illegal, and the addicted person breaks the law trying to get them. Using drugs can also make a person take risks that they would not take when they are sober.

**Health Problems** - Many who are addicted will continue to use drugs or alcohol, even when they become sick as a result of their use. For example, a person addicted to nicotine may continue to smoke, even after they have developed lung cancer.

**Financial Problems** - Addiction is expensive. Money used to buy drugs or alcohol, loss of work, and legal fines are part of the cost. The addicted person will give up a lot in order to keep using drugs or alcohol.

**Relationship Problems** - People who are addicted to drugs and alcohol often have unhealthy relationships. For the addicted person, drugs and alcohol can become more important than family and friends.

**How do I know it's addiction?** All diseases have both signs and symptoms; a symptom is what the person experiencing the disease will feel, while a sign is something that others can see. Some of the signs and symptoms of addiction are:

**Heavy Use** - People who are addicted regularly use large amounts of drugs and alcohol. This can result in physical symptoms such as headaches, feeling ill, and blackouts (the inability to recall events).

**Uncontrolled Use:** Many people who are addicted make unsuccessful attempts to stop or control their use of drugs or alcohol.

**Tolerance:** Over time, a person's body adapts to a substance to the point that they need more and more of it in order to have the same effect.

**Time and Secrecy**— As the disease of addiction grows, drugs and alcohol can become the focus of the addicted person's time and energy. He or she may refuse to attend activities where substances are not available, prefer to use when alone, or keep "secret stashes" of the substance to hide the amount being used.

**Withdrawal** - People who are addicted to drugs and alcohol experience physical and emotional changes when they try to stop using. These can be mild (fatigue, boredom, moodiness, poor concentration, insomnia), moderate (depression, anger outbursts, shaking) or severe (violent behavior, hallucinations, seizures).

**What can I do about addiction?** Like cancer, addiction is a progressive disease. This means that if not treated, it will only get worse. Some people can stop using on their own, but most need help. The good news is that treatment is available and it works! There are many different types of treatment available to help a person overcome addiction and to stay sober.

**Detoxification** - This is the removing drugs and alcohol from the body. In some cases, it is not safe for individuals who are addicted to drugs and alcohol to stop using or "detox" on their own. To do so could actually put them at risk for life-threatening symptoms including hallucinations, seizures and heart problems. For these individuals, stopping the use of drugs or alcohol must be done under the care of a doctor. Detoxification can be done in a hospital, a treatment center, or at home depending on the needs of the individual.

**Residential Treatment** - Residential treatment offers a structured setting where people recovering from addiction stay for weeks or even months. Here the temptations and stressors of everyday life are removed, allowing the individual to focus on getting well. Professionals, who specialize in treating addiction, help residents to learn about their disease and to develop plans for staying sober once they return home.