

Helpful websites about addiction

www.talktofrank.com

www.addaction.org.uk

www.samaritans.org

www.actiononaddiction.org.uk

Emotional Health Service



Contact

The Emotional Health Service

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Opening hours:

Monday to Thursday: 8.45am to 5.00pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.45 pm

W: www.afcinfo.org.uk/emotionalhealthservice

Addiction

Information for young people

What is addiction?

If we feel as though we need to repeatedly take a substance or engage in a particular behaviour, despite the fact that it is detrimental to our lives, we might say that we have an addiction. Commonly known addictions are drug abuse, alcohol abuse and gambling. However, we can become addicted to almost anything, including:

- the internet
- work
- sex
- exercise
- shopping
- food

What causes addiction?

Addiction can be caused by a number of a different things. We may be trying to deal with difficult feelings, and use mind-altering drugs as a way of coping. Addiction can also run in families, meaning that certain people may be particularly genetically vulnerable to developing addictions.

We might become addicted to a particular substance or activity for mental or physical reasons, or both. For example, an addiction to marijuana might be described as a mental addiction. This is because stopping does not lead to physical symptoms, otherwise known as 'withdrawal'. People who are addicted to marijuana may be chasing a mental high, or avoiding sober feelings. An addiction to heroine, on other hand, can be maintained by mental and physical factors.

Addiction and behaviour

If you develop an addiction, you may notice a change in your behaviour. You might be:

- less interested in everyday things
- unable to say 'no' and have a strong desire for the substance or activity
- more concerned with getting the substance or engaging in the activity than dealing with other things
- anxious, depressed or show symptoms of other mental health problems
- using more of the substance to get the same effect
- involved in criminal activity as means to maintaining your addiction
- secretive and evasive
- angry when confronted about your addiction

Getting help

Addiction is a treatable condition. Before determining what type of treatment is appropriate for you, it is important to try and understand the nature of your addiction. You could see your GP for advice or contact an organisation that specialised in helping people with addiction.

Your GP may refer you for drug counselling or a specialist for a further assessment. This may lead to outpatient treatment or, depending on the severity, day or inpatient treatment at a specialist rehabilitation clinic.