



Substance Use Prevention Toolkit | *Article*

Understanding Substance Use Treatment Options

Substance use disorders (SUDs) affect millions of people and families. Recovery is different for everyone, and no single treatment works for every person. Learning about the available treatment options can help people find the support that best fits their needs and goals.

Outpatient Treatment: Getting Help While Living at Home

Outpatient treatment allows people to receive care while continuing with daily activities such as work, school or family responsibilities. In these programs, people meet regularly with health care professionals, including counselors, therapists and doctors.

Some outpatient programs are more intensive and involve several hours of treatment each week. Others may require fewer visits. Outpatient care can be a good choice for people with mild to moderate substance use problems or for those who need continued support after completing a more structured treatment program.

Recovery Groups: Finding Support From Others

Recovery groups give people a chance to connect with others who understand what they are going through. These groups provide a safe place to talk about challenges, share successes and learn from one another.

Many people are familiar with groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), but there are many other recovery programs available. Some groups are designed for specific communities, such as young adults, LGBTQ+ individuals or people who are also managing mental health conditions.

Having support from others can help people stay motivated and feel less alone during recovery.

Medication for Addiction Treatment

For some people, medication can play an important role in recovery. Medication for Addiction Treatment (MAT) uses medicines approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to help treat substance use disorders.

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There are various levels of outpatient care, from intensive outpatient programs (IOPs) to standard outpatient services. Knowing the full range of treatment choices that are available can help individuals and families make informed decisions.

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These medications may help reduce cravings and ease withdrawal symptoms. MAT is commonly used to treat opioid use disorder and alcohol use disorder. It can be used by itself or along with counseling and other forms of treatment.

It is important to remember that MAT is not the same for everyone. Treatment should be based on a person's individual needs and guided by a qualified health care provider. Using medication to treat addiction is an evidence-based medical approach and should not be viewed as simply replacing one substance with another.

If you have questions about medication, talk with your doctor or another trusted health care provider about your options and recovery goals.

Holistic Approaches: Caring for the Whole Person

Some people find additional support through holistic therapies. These approaches focus on overall well-being and may help support both physical and mental health during recovery.

Examples include yoga, meditation, acupuncture and art therapy. Many people use these therapies along with traditional treatment programs. If you use supplements or other alternative treatments, it is important to talk with your health care provider to make sure they fit safely into your treatment plan.

The Importance of Ongoing Support

Recovery is an ongoing process that often requires support even after treatment ends. Continued care can help people maintain their progress and reduce the risk of returning to substance use.

Programs such as sober living homes, recovery alumni groups, counseling and support groups can provide structure, encouragement and guidance. These resources can help people manage everyday challenges while staying focused on their recovery goals.

Recovery Is Possible

Recovery takes time, effort and support, but positive change is possible. With the right treatment plan and a strong support system, people can build healthier habits and create a better future. Help is available, and recovery is within reach.

#SupportSobriety #RealRecovery

If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use or addiction, call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357.

Reviewed by Medical Director, Doctor of Medicine.