

Mental Health & Wellbeing at the Bar

Drug Addiction
and Dependency



Wellbeing
at the Bar

Drug Addiction and Dependency

Drug addiction and dependence is a big subject. Here we cover some of the basics and invite you to find out more depending on your specific interests. Approximately 3 million adults in the UK regularly take drugs. Contrary to popular media, there is no 'typical' drug taker and many habitual drug users are professionals holding down responsible jobs and managing all of the complexities of family life. Drug use is more frequent in the home (or a friend's house) rather than in social settings like clubs or pubs.

What is addiction and dependence to drugs?

Addiction refers to the long-term compulsive use of a drug. Dependence refers to the body's natural way of normalising levels of a drug and the consequent requirement of higher doses in order to give a 'high'.

There are four main types of drugs; stimulants, depressants, opium related painkillers and hallucinogens.

Cannabis (Marijuana) is both a stimulant and a depressant. Aside from alcohol, it is the most commonly used drug in the UK.

If you feel you are relying on any of the examples of drugs listed below to function adequately or to enjoy life, you may have a dependency issue.

Stimulants

1. Amphetamines (e.g. speed, crystal meth)
2. Anabolic steroids
3. Cocaine
4. Ecstasy
5. Khat
6. Mephedrone
7. Nicotine

Depressants

1. Alcohol
2. Benzodiazapines (common anxiety relieving and sleeping medication)
3. Caffeine

Opium Related Painkillers

1. Heroin
2. Heroin substitutes such as methadone

Hallucinogens

1. 'Magic mushrooms'
2. Ketamine
3. PCP
4. LSD

Where can I find out more?

You are not alone. If you are worried about your drug consumption start with your GP who can discuss your concerns with you and help you navigate the possible ways forward.

- www.addaction.org.uk
- <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/Drugtreatment.aspx>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/oct/05/-sp-drug-use-is-rising-in-the-uk-but-were-not-addicted>