Courtesy of your

Employee Assistance Program

www.dhhs.nh.gov or 1-800-852-3345 x 4336 (Relay NH) 7-1-1

National Recovery Month
Prevention Works • Treatment is Effective • People Recover
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See Early Signs of Alcoholism

If you drink, know the early signs of alcoholism. You may spot symptoms that allow you to be better prepared to self-diagnose the illness if it becomes necessary. Once social drinking begins, neurological and behavioral signs and symptoms begin to emerge in susceptible persons. These may include tolerance, often misperceived as a positive ability to drink more "efficiently" or in greater amounts than peers without feeling alcohol's effects. You may notice fewer adverse consequences the next morning after heavy drinking and increasingly look forward to the next opportunity to drink. You may seek out peers who drink with the same capacity as yourself. Memory loss while drinking (blackouts) may occur. You may see alcohol as a positive way to feel stimulated, and may experience boredom if unable to drink in the evening. Alcoholism is not an equal-opportunity illness. Research shows that a family history of addictive disease places one at higher risk for it. There is a myth that self-referral never happens, and that some horrible incident must force an alcoholic into treatment. Not true. A screening with a professional counselor takes only minutes, and your score and concern over the above symptoms may lead you to accept help early to avoid such an incident

Smoking Pot Clouds Judgment about Driving High

Research shows that pot users are more likely to report that they can drive safely while high. Those who were high while taking the survey believed they could drive safely, while those who smoke pot but were not high at the time they took the survey said they would not be safe driving while high. This may explain why an entirely different research study by AAA discovered that fatal crashes involving pot smokers in Washington State have doubled since legalization of pot use.

Sources: www.wcpo.com and http://her.oxfordjournals.org

Chronic Pain & Substance Abuse

Opioid addiction and prescription drug abuse are national problems. One research study discovered that 87 percent of opioid or related medication addicts are self-medicating pain. Does this sound like you or someone you know? Note these warning signs for needing help with addiction:

1. You are using the medication not just for pain but also to achieve a feel-good state.
2. Your prescribed dose seems way too low. It takes more to feel the effects.
3. Your pain has subsided, but your desire to use the medication you were given is growing. You say you're worried about the pain coming back, but the effect of the drug is really the motivating factor.
4. The medication has become part of your life, and you are planning and coordinating your life around obtaining and using the medication, even to the detriment of your family, things you enjoy, and parts of your life that you value.

Source: http://www.bumc.bu.edu

New Sedative Drug Crisis

The heroin epidemic in North America has received much attention, but overdose deaths from prescription sedative drugs (benzodiazepines, or "benzos") like Xanax, Valium, and Klonopin have also soared. Benzos are prescribed for anxiety, mood disorders, and insomnia—common complaints among employees. Research in the American Journal of Public Health reports overdose deaths are up 400 percent since 1996! A key finding: 75 percent of heroin deaths also involve these medications. Combining benzos or alcohol with heroin can increase the risk of death, and overdoses from benzos have increased at a faster rate than prescriptions for them have. Did you know that talk therapy can be more effective for many, if not the majority of, complaints treated with benzos? Solutions from talk therapy may also last longer if you acquire life skills to manage stress and solve personal problems more efficiently. Could you benefit more from talk therapy and less from benzos? Talk to your doctor about the best options for you.

Source: http://einstein.yu.edu

What Parents Need to Know about Adderall Abuse

Adderall is a stimulant (amphetamine) used primarily to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). A 2016 report from Johns Hopkins University shows a continual increase in Adderall abuse by young people (ages 18 to 25) despite a decrease in the total number of prescriptions nationwide. Abuse of Adderall typically originates with medication being stolen or illicitly given to others. Although Adderall is rarely addictive for those who legitimately use it with a prescription, its addiction potential is explained by larger doses typically used by abusers. Serious cardiovascular side effects including stroke come with Adderall abuse, and so does the risk of depression, bipolar disorder, and aggressive or hostile behavior. Is Adderall "disappearing" from your home?

Source: http://jhsph.edu

Mindfulness on the Move

The Mindful Awareness Research Center has opened at UCLA. It shows how mindfulness as an approach to health and wellness is quickly moving into health care. Mindful awareness is paying attention to the present moment, staying centered, and improving self-awareness to manage stress by stopping, breathing, observing, and connecting with one's inner experience. It's a powerful concept largely influenced by meditation and the research supporting meditation's health benefits. Adding energy to the mindfulness movement is the need to manage stress in our modern age. Mastering this stress is not simply about taking a pill to manage anxiety and tension, it's about learning to use the body's and the mind's abilities to intervene and heal. Mindfulness is finding its way into cancer treatment, addiction treatment, and other programs that can benefit from a whole-person approach.

Source: http://marc.ucla.edu

Self-Help Resources

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
http://www.aa.org

Institute for a Drug-Free Workplace
http://www.drugfreeworkplace.org

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
https://niaaa.nih.gov

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
https://www.ncadd.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
http://www.samhsa.gov

Mindfulness: Taking a balanced approach to negative emotions so that feelings are neither suppressed nor exaggerated. We cannot ignore our pain and feel compassion for it at the same time. Mindfulness requires that we not "over-identify" with thoughts and feelings, so that we are caught up and swept away by negativity.

Brené Brown

In mindfulness, acceptance always comes first, changes comes after.

Shamash Alidina