

October 2021

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Surrounding yourself with the right people,  
who care

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# Substance Abuse

Addiction is about more than drugs



### What to look for

So how do you know? Pay attention when you or someone you care about:<sup>1,2,4,5</sup>

- Becomes obsessed with an activity, substance, object or behavior.
- Seeks it out even when it causes physical problems, work or study issues, or conflict with friends and family.
- Does it over and over again or can't stop.
- Has withdrawal symptoms: jumpiness, trembling, sweating, nausea/vomiting, insomnia, depression, irritability, fatigue, loss of appetite or headaches.
- Doesn't feel in control of when, how long, or how much with the activity, substance, object or behavior.
- Hides it / denies a problem with it.
- Experiences a blackout doing it.
- Is depressed or has extreme mood swings.
- Neglects activities that were once really important.
- Has an extreme change in appearance, eating habits or energy.
- Takes serious or unnecessary health risks.
- Has a family history of addiction.
- Comes from a family that was mentally or physically abusive; has low self-esteem.

### Addiction changes how your brain works

These brain changes can lead to harmful and self-destructive behaviors. And just like diabetes, heart disease or other chronic conditions, it needs continuing long-term care.<sup>6</sup>

### Consider home life

Research suggests a higher risk for addiction and addictive behaviors if:<sup>4</sup>

- One or more of your parents had a drug, alcohol or other substance problem.
- You come from a family with a history of conflict, aggression, or other ongoing stressors.
- You have a parent with depression or mental health issues.

### Help any time you need it

If you or someone you know could be misusing substances or has symptoms of addictive behavior, get help from a doctor or contact: National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357). You can also contact your company's Employee Assistance Program or Human Resources department about helpful resources available to you.

Sources: 1) Ruth C. Engs, RN, EdD. Professor, Applied Health Science. What are Addictive Behaviors? Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405, 1987, 2012. 2) Center on Addiction: What is Addiction; Prevalence of Addiction; What is the Difference Between Drug or Alcohol Use and Addiction? (rev. April 14, 2017): centeronaddiction.org. 3) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Findings from NSDUH reveal that only a subset of individuals receive services for substance use and mental health issues (September 21, 2017): samhsa.gov/newsroom/press-announcements/201709211000. 4) Recovery.org: Family History and Addiction Risk: What You Need to Know to Beat the Odds; Addiction Signs, Symptoms, Effects and Treatment (accessed April 19, 2018): recovery.org. 5) National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence: About Addiction: Signs and Symptoms (rev. December 19, 2016): ncadd.org. 6) National Institute on Drug Abuse: The Science of Drug Abuse and Addiction: The Basics (rev. October 2016): drugabuse.gov/publications/mediaguide/science-drug-abuse-addiction-basics.



### Challenge event

#### National Make a Difference Day, 4th Saturday each October

National Make a Difference Day is an annual community service event which is held on the fourth Saturday in October. The day was created in 1992 by USA Weekend magazine and joined by Points of Light. Together, they have sponsored the largest national day of community service for more than 20 years. While the organization no longer supports Make a Difference Day, the observance still impacts communities around the country. Volunteers and organizations have taken up the banner to help their communities in ways that best fit their needs. Visit [makeadifferenceday.com](http://makeadifferenceday.com) for more information and ideas on how your associates and company can participate.

Sourced: <https://nationaldaycalendar.com/national-make-a-difference-day-fourth-saturday-in-october/>

### Healthy hint #21

#### Lead by example

What you do affects those around you. Like when you snack on carrots instead of cookies or order a grilled chicken sandwich instead of a burger ... Making great choices for your health may also encourage your family, friends and even your coworkers to make better choices for their health.

So take pride in your positive influence – and take responsibility for the little things you do. You may end up making a big difference.

### Recipe of the month

Recipe provided by UNL Food

#### Pumpkin ice cream pie

Servings: 8

#### Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 to 16 oz.) pure pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 -1/2 to 2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 quart (4 cups) of lower fat vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt
- 1 19" prepared graham cracker pie crust
- Whipped topping, if desired

#### Directions:

- Mix the pumpkin, sugar and spice until well blended.
- Quickly mix pumpkin mixture with the softened ice cream.
- Pour into crumb crust and freeze, uncovered, until firm – a couple of hours.
- When pie is frozen, cover with plastic wrap and then cover with freezer-quality foil or place in a freezer bag and squish out the air.
- Thaw pie slightly at room temperature (about 5 to 10 minutes) before serving. Top with whipped topping, if desired.
- Note: Soften ice cream by placing the container in the refrigerator for about 15 minutes to 20 minutes. Avoid repeatedly softening and refreezing ice cream as it gets icy.

#### Substance misuse truth: Everyone needs a little extra support

So you're ready to address substance misuse and addiction for yourself or a loved one, but not sure where to go? Trying to keep it private? Embarrassed? Yes, it's hard to reach out for support. To admit you need it takes guts, but it's those little extra steps, along with treatment, that can keep you or a loved one moving forward toward recovery.

The truth is that getting support:	Why it matters:
Makes you stronger.	Sharing your struggles isn't a weakness; it's a strength. To talk about it helps you cope and heal.
Helps surround you with the right people to get you care.	Support groups, health professionals, behavioral health facilities and doctors are there to help you get through it. Lean on others when you need specific help.
Motivates and inspires everyone.	It's easier to keep going when you're surrounded by acceptance and encouragement for each other's struggles, from peers who are also substance-free.
Reinforces the message that it's not your fault, but you do have the ability to change things.	It can happen to anyone. Blame and shame don't help your self-worth or help you or your loved one recover. Empower yourself to keep going.
Helps you parent to prevent or address substance misuse.	It's a great way to talk with other parents about everything kids misuse – from alcohol to pain medicine to household items – and what to do about it.
Means taking advantage of resources for the whole family	It affects the whole family so get help for everyone. Find out if you have programs or counseling services through work, like an employee assistance program.

#### Where to start?

- Your doctor (it's confidential)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- LiveHealth Online: [livehealthonline.com](http://livehealthonline.com)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- SAMHSA: [findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov)
- Partnership for Drug-free Kids: [drugfree.org](http://drugfree.org)
- Local recovery centers: [recovery.org](http://recovery.org)
- Extra resources: [whatsupwithopioids.org/connector](http://whatsupwithopioids.org/connector)

**Speak to your family doctor or other health professional right away if you're concerned someone you know could be misusing substances.**

This information is meant to educate, not serve as medical advice. See your doctor for medical advice about your health.

LiveHealth Online is the trade name of Health Management Corporation, a separate company, providing telehealth services on behalf of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield.