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# Addiction Awareness

SIX MHA are here to support you or any of your colleagues who may be facing issues relating to addictions, and their impact on you both personally and professionally.





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We provide a non-judgemental, safe and confidential service to help you on your recovery journey. Our team of addiction experts bring over 100 years of sobriety to the floor, we know the struggles you face and bring real lived experience to help develop the strategies you need to deal with any addiction you are facing.

Addiction is a chronic, relapsing condition that compels individuals to engage in certain behaviours or consume substances despite negative consequences. It affects not only physical and mental health but also personal relationships, financial stability, and overall well-being. Addictions can take many forms, ranging from substance use to behavioural dependencies, each having unique impacts on the individual.





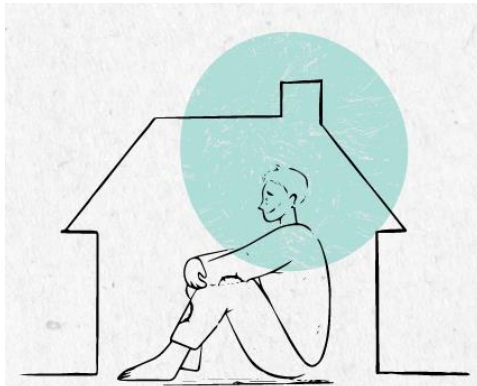
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# Substance Addictions



# Alcohol Addiction

Alcohol addiction, also known as alcoholism, is a dependence on alcohol that is characterized by an inability to control drinking despite harmful consequences.



## Social Impact

- Strained relationships (family, friends)
- Decline in work/school performance
- Legal problems (DUIs, arrests)
- Financial difficulties



## Physical Impact

- Liver damage (e.g., cirrhosis, fatty liver)
- Heart disease
- Increased risk of cancer (e.g., mouth, liver, breast cancer)
- Weakened immune system
- Gastrointestinal problems

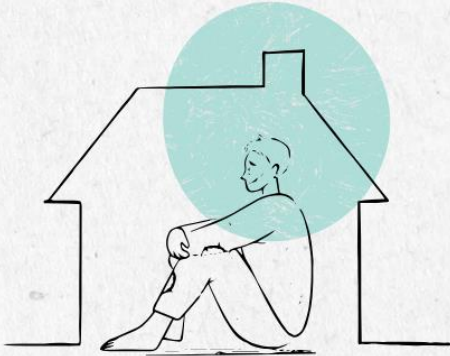


## Mental Impact

- Depression and anxiety
- Cognitive impairments, memory loss
- Increased risk of suicide
- Behavioural changes (aggression, irritability)

# Drug Addiction

Drug addiction involves a compulsive urge to use certain substances like opioids, stimulants (e.g., cocaine, meth), cannabis, or prescription medications, often resulting in physical and psychological dependence.



## Social Impact

- Criminal activity (due to seeking money for drugs)
- Loss of jobs or education opportunities
- Isolation from family and friends
- Homelessness



## Physical Impact

- Damage to organs (heart, lungs, kidneys)
- Neurological problems
- Risk of infectious diseases (e.g., HIV, hepatitis from needles)
- Overdose and death
- Withdrawal symptoms (nausea, seizures, sweating)

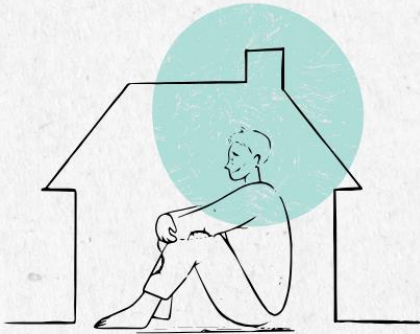


## Mental Impact

- Mood swings and aggression
- Depression, anxiety, and paranoia
- Psychosis (in the case of some drugs like methamphetamine)
- Cognitive impairment (memory loss, poor decision-making)

# Nicotine Addiction

Nicotine addiction occurs due to the consumption of tobacco products such as cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco. This substance is highly addictive, causing both psychological and physical dependence.



## Social Impact

- Social stigma due to smoking habits
- Difficulty quitting despite awareness of risks
- Strained relationships, especially in non-smoking environments
- Financial strain from continued purchases of tobacco products



## Physical Impact

- Lung cancer and respiratory diseases (COPD, emphysema)
- Cardiovascular diseases (heart attack, stroke)
- Weakened immune system
- Reduced fertility
- Premature aging



## Mental Impact

- Irritability and restlessness
- Increased anxiety and stress levels
- Nicotine withdrawal (headaches, insomnia, mood swings)



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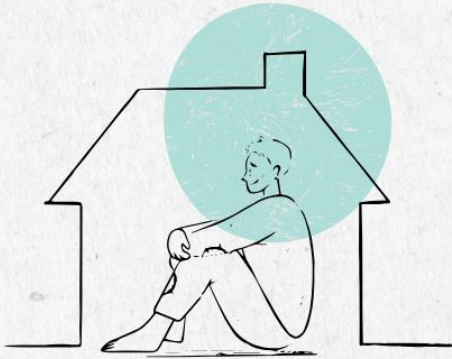
# Behavioural Addictions



# Gambling Addiction

Gambling addiction, or compulsive gambling, is the uncontrollable urge to gamble despite the negative consequences, leading to personal and financial ruin.

9 of the 18 suicides per day in the UK are gambling debt related!



## Social Impact

- Bankruptcy and severe financial issues
- Ruined relationships (due to lying, borrowing, stealing)
- Job loss and criminal behavior (embezzlement, fraud)
- Legal issues and imprisonment



## Physical Impact

- Sleep deprivation
- Stress-related health issues (high blood pressure, heart problems)
- Neglect of basic self-care (nutrition, exercise)



## Mental Impact

- Anxiety and depression
- Suicidal thoughts, especially after financial loss
- Cognitive distortions related to gambling wins and losses



# Internet/Gaming Addiction

Internet and gaming addiction involves an excessive amount of time spent on online activities or video games, often leading to neglect of real-life responsibilities and personal health.



## Social Impact

- Isolation from friends and family
- Neglect of work or academic responsibilities
- Financial problems (e.g., spending on games, in-game purchases)
- Damaged relationships due to lack of interaction



## Physical Impact

- Eye strain, carpal tunnel syndrome
- Poor posture, back, and neck pain
- Sedentary lifestyle leading to obesity or poor fitness
- Sleep disturbances

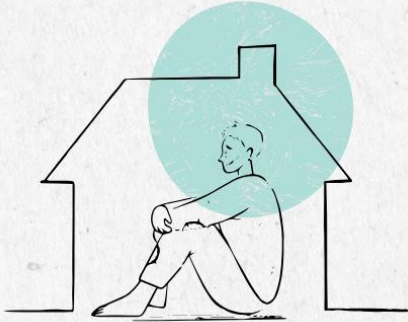


## Mental Impact

- Escapism, social withdrawal
- Anxiety and depression
- Irritability, especially when not connected or playing
- Poor time management and loss of productivity

# Food Addiction

Food addiction is characterized by the compulsive consumption of highly palatable foods, such as those high in sugar, fat, and salt, despite negative physical or emotional effects.



## Social Impact

- Social withdrawal or isolation due to body image issues
- Strained family relationships
- Financial strain from excessive food purchases
- Difficulty in participating in social events involving food



## Physical Impact

- Obesity and related health issues (diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure)
- Digestive problems
- Hormonal imbalances
- Malnutrition (from eating unhealthy foods)

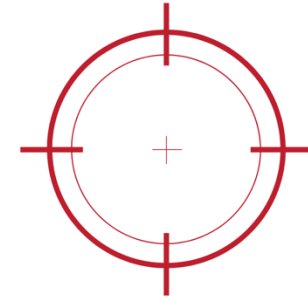


## Mental Impact

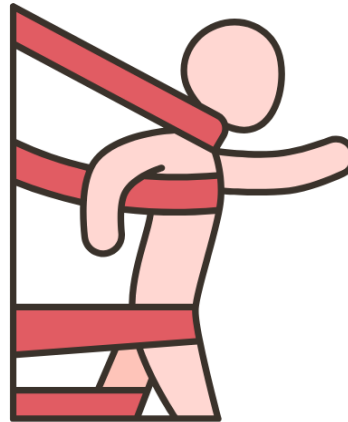
- Guilt, shame, and low self-esteem
- Emotional eating to cope with stress or sadness
- Depression and anxiety



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# Impacts on the individual





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**Physical Health** - Addictions can lead to long-term and sometimes irreversible damage to vital organs and systems. This includes everything from weakened immune function and chronic diseases to the risk of fatal overdose or life-threatening complications. Addicted individuals often neglect self-care, leading to malnutrition, exhaustion, and susceptibility to injury or illness.

**Mental Health** - Addictions significantly impact mental well-being, leading to disorders like anxiety, depression, and in severe cases, suicidal tendencies. The obsession with the addictive substance or behaviour becomes central to the person's life, often leading to cognitive distortions, poor decision-making, and an inability to focus on real-life priorities.

**Social Relationships** - Addictions often fracture relationships with loved ones due to deceit, neglect, and erratic behaviour. The individual may isolate themselves or experience alienation from those who don't understand their struggles. Marriages, friendships, and parental bonds often deteriorate as the addiction takes precedence over personal connections.





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**Financial Stability-** Financial instability is a common consequence of addiction. Substance addictions often lead to job loss, overspending, and even criminal activity to fund the addiction. Behavioural addictions, like gambling, can result in significant debt, bankruptcy, and loss of assets, leaving individuals financially devastated, and often contemplating suicide.

**Legal Issues-** Many addictions, especially to substances like drugs or alcohol, increase the likelihood of encountering legal problems. These may include arrests for drug possession, driving under the influence, or involvement in criminal activities to sustain the addiction. Legal consequences often exacerbate the challenges of recovery, creating additional hurdles.



Let's  
Grow  
Together



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# Conclusion

Addictions in any form severely disrupt an individual's life, creating a cycle of dependence and negative consequences. Whether it's a substance or a behavioural addiction, the impacts are profound and far-reaching, affecting physical health, mental well-being, social relationships, and financial security. Early intervention and comprehensive treatment are essential for breaking free from the hold of addiction and reclaiming a healthy, fulfilling life.

HELP  
NEEDED

