



Drug abuse effect on health and society

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Drug abuse term often refers to the consistent use of drugs without putting into consideration the reasons why it was recommended. Some of the most commonly abused drugs are alcohol, cocaine, opium and other psychoactive drugs. Depending on the actual compound, drug abuse including alcohol may lead to health problems, social problems, injuries, unprotected sex, violence, deaths, motor vehicle accidents, suicides, homicides, physical addictions or psychological addictions. Although youths in the current century involve in drug abuse due to several factors. There are two prime causes of drug abuse among the youths. These are (1) peer pressure and (2) depression. Drug abuse can affect one's health and can lead to countless physical health problems like cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks and strokes, respiratory problems, liver damage or many others. It can have profound effects on mental health also like anxiety, depression, and psychosis, impaired functioning, affecting memory and decision making abilities. The effect of drug abuse on person is going to be viewed from different aspects. These are: Social aspect, financial aspect, physical health aspect and mental health aspect. In our society drug abuse can strain relationships and negatively impact on social interactions, breakdown of family relationships due to trust matters, conflicts, isolation and withdrawal from social groups, leading to feelings of loneliness, difficulty in maintaining employment or fulfilling responsibilities, resultant financial strain and instability. This article is dealing with drug abuse introduction, effect of drug abuse on one's health and its effect on society.

Keywords: Drug Abuse, Psychoactive drugs, Physical Health Problems, Mental Health

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Introduction

Drug addiction isn't about just cocaine, heroin, or other illegal drugs. Anyone can get addicted to alcohol, nicotine, sleep and anti-anxiety medications, and other legal substances. One can also get addicted to prescription or illegally obtained narcotic pain medications, or opioids. Differing explanations of drug abuse are used in public health, medical, and criminal justice perspectives. In some cases, criminal or anti-social behavior occurs when a person is under the influence of a drug, and long-term personality changes in persons may also occur.

[1] Drug addiction is a chronic disease categorized by drug seeking and use that is compulsive, or hard to control, despite harmful consequences. Brain changes that occur over time with drug use challenge an addicted person's self-control and interfere with their capacity to resist intense cravings to take drugs. India too is caught in this vicious circle of drug abuse, and numbers of drug addicts are increasing day by day. According to UN report, One million heroin addicts are registered in India, and unofficially there are as many as five million.**[2]** Drug abuse leads to drug addiction with development of tolerance and craving. Tolerance refers to a condition where a user needs more and more of a drug to feel the same effect. Few drugs produce only psychological dependence while others produce both physical and psychological dependency. When physical and psychological dependence develops, a person's body becomes totally dependent on the drug. If prolonged use, the body becomes so used to working under the effect of a drug, which it is able to function normally only if the drug is present in the body. After a person becomes dependent, if intake of drugs is suddenly stopped, withdrawal symptoms occur. Withdrawal is the response of the body towards suddenly stopping a drug. To avoid unpleasant withdrawal symptoms, a person must keep on abusing the drug. The individual is thus forced to continue drug abuse even if one knows that the drug is destroying his/her body.**[3]** Undoubtedly, prevention and treatment are two main intervention approaches that have been commonly adopted to tackle substance abuse. There are 2 types of drugs- 1. Legal drugs 2. Illegal drugs.

Legal drugs

Legal drugs are subject to authoritarian regulations, quality control, and are prescribed by healthcare experts.

Legal drugs can also have potential risks and side effects, they are generally considered safer when used as directed. Drugs like aspirin, cough syrups, laxatives, antacids, vitamins and certain contraceptives etc. are legal drugs.

Illegal drugs

Illegal drugs are forbidden by law. They are not used legally but are abused largely. Illegal drugs are varying in nature according to their capability to produce clinical dependency. Heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturate etc. are strongly addiction-producing drugs.

Cause of drug abuse: There are so many causes of drug abuse likely to include genetic predisposition, co-occurring conditions and environmental surroundings. Drug use and experimentation is common in pre-adolescents and adolescents. Research shows that certain social groups with a higher tendency towards substance taking and misuse are adolescents and male adults.**[4]** Causes of substance abuse can be explained under the following headings**[5]**-

Social factors: Peer pressure (One of the most important causes), Role-Modeling/imitation, Easy availability, Conflicts (usually interfamilial), Cultural/Religious reasons, Lack of social or familial support, Social attitude, Celebrations.

Psychological Factors: Curiosity, As a novelty, Social rebelliousness (disobedience), Poor control, Sensation seeking (Feeling high), Low self-esteem (Anomie), Poor stress management, Childhood trauma, to escape reality, No interest in conventional goals, Psychological distress.**[6]**

Biological Factors: Family history, genetic tendency, Pre-existing psychiatric or personality disorder, or a medical disorder, Emphasizing effects of drugs, Withdrawal effects and craving, Biochemical factors.**[7]**

Effect of drug abuse on health: Drug abuse has negative effects on health. Different drug abuse shows different effects.

Alcohol

Deficits in coordination, a quickened heartbeat, reddening of the skin or face, dizziness, nausea and vomiting, potential hypothermia, potential coma, risk of liver disease, heart disease, depression, stroke, and stomach bleeding,

As well as cancers of the oral cavity, esophagus, larynx, pharynx, liver, colon, and rectum.[8,9] Alcohol ingestion is associated with increased possibility of drowning and injuries from violence, falls, and motor vehicle crashes.[10] It is also associated with an increased risk of female breast cancer, oropharyngeal cancer, esophageal cancer (especially in individuals who inherit an insufficiency in an enzyme involved in alcohol digestion), and injurious medication interactions.[11]

Tobacco

The category of product smoked is most commonly cigarettes, but can also include cigarillos, cigars, pipes or water pipes. 'Smokeless' tobacco is also popular in some place of the world. This typically includes using tobacco preparations for chewing, sniffing into the nose or placing as a wad in the mouth between the cheeks and gums.[12] Short term effects of tobacco are increased blood pressure, increased breathing, and increased heart rate. Tobacco smokes possess biologically significant concentrations of known carcinogens as well as various other toxic chemicals. Some of these, including a number of tobacco-specific nitrosamines (particularly NNK and NNN) are constituents of tobacco, largely as a result of the way it is processed, while others such as benzopyrene result from burning of tobacco.[13] The nicotine in tobacco smoke may cause a small part of the increase in cardiovascular disease but none or almost none of the increase in risk of respiratory disease or cancer. [14] Cigarette smoking is a precursor for transitional cell carcinomas of the bladder, ureter, and renal pelvis.[15] Oropharyngeal and hypopharyngeal cancer have also been reported to be initiated by cigarette smoking.[16] In a year more than 7 million deaths are occurred by cigarette use, and 1.2 million are non-smokers exposed to cigarette smoke.[17] Smoking in both women and men reduces fertility.[18]

Heroin

This illegal drug is the natural version of artificial preparation opioid narcotics. Heroin is a powerful opioid that can cause drowsiness, nausea, slowed heart rate, and other physical effects. Taking heroin often may lead to physical dependence, which can cause symptoms of withdrawal. Short-term effects of heroin on body are calmness, heaviness of arms and legs, drowsiness, dry mouth, nausea, constricted pupils, warm flushing of skin, itchiness.

Some persons who begin using opioids for genuine pain may go on to misuse the drugs, which may outcome in further negative health impacts. Respiratory depression, or slowed breathing, can occur due to the sedative effects of the drug and may cause in overdose and death. Some opioids demonstrate among the highest active/lethal dose ratios of any illicit substances, meaning they are some of the most hazardous drugs when it comes to potential for overdose.[19]

Long-term effects of heroin use: decreased appetite, constipation, and changes in sleep, insomnia, and even malnutrition.

Injecting heroin: track marks, damaged blood vessels, abscesses, and bruising, sharing drug paraphernalia (such as needles, syringes, and spoons) high risk of contracting infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.

Cocaine

Cocaine is a potent stimulant. It makes ones to feel more alert and energetic and also less hungry or thirsty. These paraphernalia can last for up to 20 minutes after each use. Smoking crack cocaine bounces a shorter but more intense high.[20] Cocaine-induced cardio toxicity can cause sudden death. In addition, previous studies have explored the difficult pathophysiological mechanisms of cocaine cardio toxicity.[21] Cocaine interrupts brain function, including resting state activity, response to stimulation, and functional connectivity between brain regions.[22] Other short term effects are constricted blood vessels, high body temperature, rapid heart rate, high blood pressure, heart failure, and stroke, headache, abdominal pain, nausea, decreased appetite, with a risk of malnourishment among chronic users, severe paranoia, an impaired sense of reality, hallucinations, upper respiratory tract problems from regular snorting, including a loss of the sense of smell, nosebleeds, nasal septum decay, swallowing problems, persistent runny nose, and hoarseness, severe bowel gangrene caused by a reduction in blood flow among those who ingest regularly, injecting upsurges the risk of severe allergic reactions and blood-borne diseases, such as HIV and hepatitis.[23]

Marijuana

"Marijuana" refers to the dried leaves of the *Cannabis sativa* plant.[24]

Cannabis can make the heart beat faster and increase blood pressure immediately after use, increased risk of stroke, heart disease, and other vascular diseases.[25] Smoked cannabis, regardless of how it is smoked, can harm lung tissues and cause scarring and damage to small blood vessels. [26] Short term effects are altered senses like seeing brighter colours, altered sense of time, changes in mood, impaired body movement, difficulty with thinking and problem-solving, impaired memory, hallucinations, delusions, psychosis. Long terms effects are daily cough and phlegm, more frequent lung illness, and a higher risk of lung infections and higher risk for lung cancer in people who smoke marijuana,[27] increase the rate of heart attack, can develop Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome. [28]

Amphetamines

Amphetamines are a group of stimulant drugs, some of which were used in the past as slimming tablets. High doses of amphetamines can cause panic, paranoia and hallucinations. In long-term effects develop a condition known as 'amphetamine psychosis', with symptoms like schizophrenia. The paranoia can cause to become violent if person believe being threatened or persecuted.[29] Heart problems such as fast heart rate, irregular heartbeat, increased blood pressure, and heart attack, high body temperature and skin flushing, memory loss, problems thinking clearly, and stroke, mood and emotional problems such as aggressive or violent behaviour, depression, and suicide, on-going hallucinations and inability to tell what is real, restlessness and tremors, skin sores, sleep problems, tooth decay. Adverse effects recorded in drug labels of prescription amphetamines include disturbance of mood and behavior in addition to cardiac and gastrointestinal effects. Most of these adverse effects are considered "time-limited", resolving rapidly after withdrawal of stimulant exposure. The most common drug-related effects are loss of appetite, insomnia, emotional problem, nervousness and fever.[30] Neurotoxic damage to the serotonergic and dopaminergic neurons has been projected for psychosis resembling schizophrenia.[31]

LSD

Physical short-term effects of LSD are dizziness, sleeplessness, dilated pupils, increased heart rate and blood pressure, increased body temperature,

Sweating, dry mouth, loss of appetite, numbness, weakness, and tremors.[32] Mental effects are visual hallucinations, which can involve intense flashes of light and distorted images and reality, intensified senses, including smells, sounds, and sensations, feeling detached from your body or like you're having an out-of-body experience, blending of sensory perception (synthesis), like hearing colors or seeing sounds, distorted sense of time and environment, feelings of euphoria, paranoia and delusions, mood swings, anxiety and panic, fear. [33,34]

Drug abuse effect on society

Drug abuse can have a significant impact on society at large, leading to increased healthcare costs, decreased productivity, and a burden on social welfare systems. Effect of substance abuse on families can include financial distress, loss of relationships, legal problems, and emotional strain. Drug abuse can have a devastating impact on families and communities, leading to social and economic disintegration. Families may struggle to provide care and support for individuals who abuse drugs, leading to stress, anxiety, and financial hardship. Communities may also suffer from increased crime rates, social unrest, and a breakdown in social cohesion.[35] Substance abuse affects many more individuals than just the dependent individual, including their family members, neighbours, employers, and friends. Drug abuse can have severe social consequences, leading to increased crime rates, domestic violence, and social disintegration. The impact of substance abuse on the economy is vast, but can include loss of productivity in employees, financial distress to fund the addiction, loss of employment due to legal consequences, increased criminal activity, and unexpected expenses for related health issues. Drugs lesser inhibition and hinder judgement, encouraging people to involve in criminal behaviour. Teasing, gang fights, assaults, and impulsive killings are now on the increase as a result of drug addiction.[36]

Conclusion

Tobacco and alcohol are two legally permitted types of substances that have been widely used by different social groups across various societies and cultures.[37] Drug abuse is a major problem that can have far-reaching negative effects on society.

It can lead to sort of health problems, both physical & mental, as well as to dependence & other negative consequences. Drug abuse is also related with criminal activity, lost productivity & economic costs. It can create problems for families & social relationships & can pose risk to public safety. Strong relationships within family, structure of authority & overall happiness can affect progress & acceleration of abuse. As such, it is important to recover problem of drug abuse through prevention, education, and treatment.

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