

"Can You See Me?" Campaign: Alcohol Addiction Help Sheet

Understanding Alcohol Addiction

Alcohol addiction, also known as alcoholism or alcohol use disorder (AUD), is a chronic condition characterized by an inability to control alcohol consumption despite negative consequences. It can lead to severe physical, mental, and social health issues if left untreated.

Signs and Symptoms of Alcohol Addiction

1. **Increased Tolerance:** Needing more alcohol to achieve the same effects.
2. **Withdrawal Symptoms:** Experiencing physical or emotional distress when not drinking.
3. **Loss of Control:** Inability to limit alcohol intake or stop drinking despite efforts.
4. **Preoccupation with Drinking:** Spending a significant amount of time thinking about, obtaining, or recovering from alcohol use.
5. **Neglecting Responsibilities:** Prioritizing drinking over obligations at work, school, or home.
6. **Continued Use Despite Consequences:** Persisting in drinking despite knowing it's causing problems in relationships, health, or legal issues.

Signs and Symptoms of Withdrawal

1. **Shakiness/Tremors**
2. **Nausea/Vomiting**
3. **Anxiety/Irritability**
4. **Sweating**
5. **Headaches**
6. **Insomnia**
7. **Hallucinations (in severe cases)**

Withdrawal can be a life threatening emergency, do not attempt to stop alcohol at home, reach out to a professional or click the links below to get more help if you or a loved one would like to stop drinking alcohol.

How Friends and Family Can Help

1. **Express Concern:** Approach your loved one with care and express your worries about their drinking.
2. **Offer Support:** Encourage them to seek professional help and offer to accompany them to appointments.
3. **Avoid Enabling Behaviors:** Refrain from covering up for their alcohol-related issues or providing them with alcohol.
4. **Educate Yourself:** Learn about alcohol addiction to better understand what your loved one is going through.
5. **Encourage Healthy Activities:** Suggest and participate in activities that don't involve alcohol.
6. **Practice Self-Care:** Take care of yourself and seek support from others, such as counseling or support groups.

Resources for Support and Information

1. **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA):** Visit their website for comprehensive information on alcohol addiction, treatment options, and resources for individuals and families. <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov>
2. **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):** A fellowship of individuals who support each other in recovering from alcohol addiction. Attend meetings or find online resources for support. <https://www.aa.org>
3. **SAMHSA National Helpline:** Confidential, free, 24/7 helpline providing information, referrals, and support for individuals and families facing substance abuse and mental health issues. Call 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or visit their website. <https://www.samhsa.gov>
4. **Local Support Groups:** Look for local support groups or community organizations that offer assistance to individuals struggling with alcohol addiction and their families.

Remember, seeking help is the first step towards recovery. You are not alone, and support is available. Don't hesitate to reach out for help or support for yourself or a loved one.

Together, we can overcome alcohol addiction. You are seen, you are heard, and you are valued.