

# SIGNS OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE

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If you notice unexplained changes in physical appearance or behavior, it may be a sign of alcohol or other drug use – or it could be a sign of another problem. You will not know for sure until a professional does a screening.

There are a number of signs related to particular substances. These can vary in intensity, depending on level of intoxication. The following are signs of substance use/abuse:

## Signs of Alcohol Intoxication

- Slurred speech or difficulty expressing a thought intelligibly
- Lack of coordination, poor balance
- Can't walk a straight line
- Can't focus on your eyes
- Red eyes or flushed face
- Morning headaches, nausea, weakness, or sweatiness
- Odor of alcohol on breath or in sweat

## Signs of Marijuana Use

- Bloodshot eyes (or bottles of eye drops to clear up red eyes)
- Smelling in hair or on clothing (sweet, pungent odor)
- "Munchies" or sudden appetite
- Wetting lips or excessive thirst (known as "cotton mouth")
- Burned or sooty fingers (from "joints" or "roaches" burning down)
- Seeds left in devises used to clean marijuana (Frisbees are a typical tool used for this purpose) or items used as makeshift smoking devises (bongs made out of toilet paper rolls and aluminum foil for example)
- Possible paranoia

## Signs of Cocaine Use

- Jumpy, nervous behavior
- Restlessness
- Excessively talkative, rapid speech
- Pupils dilated (enlarged) in well-lit room
- Runny nose or bloody nose (not cold or other illness associated)
- Periods of high energy followed by long sleep or exhaustion

## Signs of Amphetamine Use

- Unusually elated (manic)
- Jumpy, shaking hands, restlessness
- Fast speech, possibly incoherent
- Poor appetite and/or weight loss
- Hyperactivity
- Insomnia
- Periods of sleeplessness, followed by long periods of "catch up" sleep
- Poor attention span

## Signs of Hallucinogen Use

- Dazed appearance
- Body tremors
- Hallucinations
- Paranoia
- Uncoordinated
- Nausea
- Disoriented
- Difficulty in speech
- Perspiring
- Poor perception of time and distance
- Memory loss
- Flashbacks

## Signs of PCP Use

- Perspiring
- Warm to the touch
- Blank stare
- Difficulty in speech
- Incomplete verbal responses
- Repetitive speech
- Increased pain threshold
- Confused/agitated
- Hallucinations
- Possibly violent and combative

## Signs of Inhalant Use

These types of inhalants used might be found in any household including glue, paints, paint thinners, White Out, gasoline, aerosol chemicals, Dust off (computer cleaner), and whipped cream in a can. If you notice these items missing from their proper place or suddenly emptied, it could be a sign someone is using these substances. Other signs include:

- Aggressive or hostile behavior
- Residue of substance around nose or mouth
- Sore tongue and/or mouth
- Violent outbursts
- Moves slowly, as if lethargic (“drugged” appearance)
- Slurred speech
- Inability to focus
- Stupor
- Lack of coordination
- Seizures
- Nausea/vomiting
- Trouble moving/lack of muscle control
- Unable to speak intelligibly
- Intense headaches