

ADDICTION TO SUBSTANCES By Sorika de Swardt – Addiction Consultant at Elim Clinic

	Substance and street names	Route of administration	Reason for use	Signs of dependence or intoxication	Withdrawal symptoms when substance is not taken	Dangers with use
Depressants / Downers						
	Alcohol— (Ethyl) e.g. cider, whisky, gin, beer, brandy, vodka, liquor, wine. Juice, bevvvy, pop, booze, dop.	Swallowed - Alcohol is absorbed in the bloodstream and its effects depend on its strength of the drink and the individual's metabolism.	Relieves tension and eliminates worries from the conscious mind whilst under the influence. Makes user calm and relaxed or happy. Induces sleep.	Drowsiness, lack of concentration, impaired rational thinking, slow physical responses, impaired functioning in relationships, at school or work. Irresponsible management of money. Hiding alcohol from family and friends and lies about the amount used. Anger when asked or confronted about use.	Insomnia, depression, nervousness, twitching and shaking, aggression, physical pain and nausea.	Mental deterioration, lack of alertness, damage to organs such as liver, kidneys, brain etc. Blackouts, convulsions / fits, death (from overdose), severe physiological dependence. Severe depression. Associated with violence and aggression, road accidents, risky sexual behaviour and injuries due to disorientation.
	Inhalants / solvents. Industrial and household substances like benzene, petrol, acetone, hexane, nephtha, ruorocarbons, carbon tetrachloride, glue, turpentine, paint thinners, amylnitrite, isobutyl nitrite. Aunt poppie, poppers.	Inhaled or sniffed - Inhaled vapours are absorbed through the lungs and pass rapidly through the blood to the brain.	Light-headedness, drowsiness, numbness, weightlessness, vivid fantasies, dissociation. Out of body experience.	Fatigue, forgetfulness, tremors, thirst, inability to think logically or clearly, Feelings of persecution, irritability and hostility.	Chills, hallucinations, depression, anxiety, delirium, headaches, muscular cramps, abdominal pains, hostile outbursts, nausea.	Damage to central and peripheral nervous systems, kidneys, liver and mucous membrane of the respiratory tract, death due to asphyxiation, laryngospasm and heart attack.
Stimulants / Uppers						
	Cathinone (also known as cat) / methamphetamine (tik, meth) cocaine and crack (rock, coke, snow). Appetite suppressants containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. LSD, ecstasy, speed and amphetamines.	Stimulants can be swallowed, snorted, injected or smoked. Stimulants force the release of the body's own energy chemicals and stimulate the reward /pleasure centre of the brain.	Creates false confidence and causes excessive happiness. Very focussed and lots of energy. Suppresses appetite and keeps person alert and awake.	Pale face, involuntary movement and twitching, unnatural excitement, loss of appetite. Insomnia, rapid pulse, skin rash and overconfident behaviour. Aggression which is out of character for person. Heightened and risky sexual behaviour. Dilated pupils, hyperactivity.	Cramps in muscles, very low mood, depression, drowsiness and lethargy. Unnatural long periods of sleep. Irritability and aggression. Headaches and nausea.	High blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, damage to tissue of nasal passage if sniffed or snorted. Convulsions and death is possible after overdose. Crack is a smoking form of cocaine. Damage to throat, lungs and mouth when smoked. Infections and injuries when crashed and injected. Severe and unhealthy / dangerous weight loss. Severe depression and possibility of anxiety and paranoia.
Hallucinogens						
	Dagga - cannabis, grass, joint, boom, zol, dope, skyf, weed, hash, poison, chronic, bhang, black, blast, blow, blunts, bob hope, bush, drop, draw, ganja, hashish, hemp, herb, marijuana, pot, puff, lights, resin, sensi, sensemilla, skunk, smoke, backy, zero. Some names are based on where it comes from: Afghan; home-grown; Moroccan; Durban Poison; etc.	Cannabis can be smoked, chewed or made into a tea.	Relaxation, alleviation of anxiety, feeling of well-being and euphoria. Feels more creative.	Bloodshot eyes, drooping eyelids, unnatural thirst or hunger (munchies), uncontrolled moods, overly talkative under influence, disturbance of judgement, giggling, impaired perception of depth and distance (distortion of reality).	In some users - restlessness, aggression, insomnia, moodiness, lack of self-control, lethargy, irritability, nausea, decreased appetite, headaches and low mood. Low motivation and low energy levels.	Accidents due to distorted perception, Excessive aggression when combined with alcohol in some people. Anxiety , psychosis, physical damage in form of bronchial irritation, risk of lung cancer, chromosome damage, interference with ovulation. Possible onset of psychotic illness like schizophrenia.
Opioids / Narcotics						
	Opium. (0's, oupa). Heroin (smack, horse, brown), morphine (morph, miss emma, krokodil). Codeine, pethadine (peths), Wellconal (pinks, welks). When mixed with dagga and ARV's it is called Nyaope or Whoonga.	Some users will snort or sniff heroin powder. Smoking heroin on foil is a popular method - called chasing the dragon. Diverted pharmaceutical tablets may be swallowed or crushed and injected. Heroin can be injected in muscles, veins or just under the skin (known as skin popping).	Powerful pain killer. Creates an intense feeling of warmth, happiness and wellbeing. Euphoria.	Small constricted pupils, injection marks and bruises on arms, thighs, groin, neck and ankles. Unnatural calmness, drowsiness and personality changes when craving. Decreased appetite and low sexual drive.	Sleeplessness, nervousness, anxiety, intense physical pain, aggression, hot and cold flushes, running nose and cramps in muscles, severe vomiting and abdominal pains, twitching and jerkiness.	Mental deterioration, impotence, sterility, physical deterioration, weight loss, loss of interest in life in general, convulsions, coma and death from overdose, severe physiological dependence. Severe changes in brain chemistry and function.
Hypnotics - sleeping tablets and Tranquillisers - calming tablets						
	Sleeping tablets and calming tablets to relieve anxiety. Barbiturates (barbs, downers, blues, yellows, red devices, red birds, bows, vees - Mandrax (mandies, buttons. whites), Diazepam (valium, vax, doval), Oxazepam (serepax and purata), Lorazepam (ativan, tranqil, tranqipam), Nitrazepam (mogadon, lyladomi noctene).	Diverted pharmaceutical tablets may be swallowed or crushed and injected or mixed with tobacco or dagga and smoked.	Relieves insomnia and eliminates worries from the conscious mind whilst under the influence. Reduce anxiety, panic and fear.	Drowsiness, lack of concentration, slow thinking and reactions. Feeling like you have a hangover. Faulty judgement and emotional Instability. Low mood.	Insomnia, nervousness, anxiety, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, hallucinations, seizures (fits) and low mood.	Could lead to mental sluggishness, lack of alertness. Coma and death from overdose. Respiratory and circulatory collapse. Severe physiological dependence. Depression and suicidal ideas may occur. Weight gain.