

# Substance Use Disorder: Care Instructions



## Overview

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You can improve your life and health by stopping your use of alcohol or drugs. When you don't drink or use drugs, you may feel and sleep better. You may get along better with your family, friends, and coworkers. There are medicines and programs that can help with substance use disorder.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

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Here are some ways to help you stay sober and prevent relapse.

- If you have been given medicine to help keep you sober or reduce your cravings, be sure to take it exactly as prescribed.
- Talk to your doctor about programs that can help you stop using drugs or drinking alcohol.
- Do not keep alcohol or drugs in your home.
- Plan ahead. Think about what you'll say if other people ask you to drink or use drugs. Try not to spend time with people who drink or use drugs.
- Use the time and money spent on drinking or drugs to do something that's important to you.

## Preventing a relapse

- Have a plan to deal with relapse. Learn to recognize changes in your thinking that lead you to drink or use drugs. Get help before you start to drink or use drugs again.
- Try to stay away from situations, friends, or places that may lead you to drink or use drugs.
- If you feel the need to drink alcohol or use drugs again, seek help right away. Call a trusted friend or family member. Some people get support from organizations such as Narcotics Anonymous or SMART Recovery or from treatment facilities.
- If you relapse, get help as soon as you can. Some people make a plan with another person that outlines what they want that person to do for them if they relapse. The plan usually includes how to handle the relapse and who to notify in case of relapse.

- Don't give up. Remember that a relapse doesn't mean that you have failed. Use the experience to learn the triggers that lead you to drink or use drugs. Then quit again. Recovery is a lifelong process. Many people have several relapses before they are able to quit for good.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## When should you call for help?

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**Call 911** anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if you or someone else:

- Has overdosed or has withdrawal signs. Be sure to tell the emergency workers that you are or someone else is using or trying to quit using drugs. Overdose or withdrawal signs may include:
  - Losing consciousness.
  - Seizure.
  - Seeing or hearing things that aren't there (hallucinations).
- Is thinking or talking about suicide or harming others.

### **Where to get help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week**

If you or someone you know talks about suicide, self-harm, a mental health crisis, a substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress, get help right away. You can:

- Call the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at **988**.
- Call **1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)**.
- Text **HOME to 741741** to access the Crisis Text Line.

Consider saving these numbers in your phone.

Go to **988lifeline.org** for more information or to chat online.

**Call your doctor now** or seek immediate medical care if:

- You are having withdrawal symptoms. These may include nausea or vomiting, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You have a relapse.
- You need more help or support to stop.

## Where can you learn more?

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Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **H573** in the search box to learn more about "**Substance Use Disorder: Care Instructions**".

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