

HOW TO SAVE A LIFE

Drugs cause the deaths of many people all around the world and destroy the lives of countless more. Many others have lost family members and close friends to the menace of drugs. Do not be the next victim. Do not take chances when it comes


to your loved ones. If you think a friend of yours might be abusing drugs, refer to the list below and see if he or she displays any of the physical, behavioural or emotional warning signs.

Physical Warning Signs




- Changes in appetite
- Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- Bloodshot eyes
- Deterioration of personal grooming habits
- Tremors, slurred speech or poor coordination

Emotional Warning Signs




- Sudden mood swings
- Unusually hyperactive, agitated or dizzy
- Displays a lack of motivation
- Appears lethargic or in a daze
- Unexplained changes in personality or attitude
- Exhibits fearful, anxious, or paranoid behaviours

Behavioural Warning Signs



- Unexplained need for money or financial problems
- Drop in attendance and performance at work or school
- Engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviours
- Sudden change in friends, favourite hangouts, and hobbies
- Frequently getting into fights, accidents or illegal activities.

 If you suspect that your friend shows similar signs and symptoms, then it is time to take action.

(Source: National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.
<https://ncadd.org/for-parents-overview/what-to-look-for>)

TAKE ACTION



The first step in helping your friend would be to get him or her to acknowledge that abusing drugs is indeed a problem. It does not matter which stage of drug abuse your friend might be in - be it experimental, social, habitual or dependant. Should you be able to achieve this (expect this to take some time), it makes a good start.

Next, probe further by trying to understand what might be the root cause of his or her drug abuse. It might be problems at home, relationships, studies - or something else entirely. The important thing here is to listen to his or her problems and show that you care.

Not everyone can become a counsellor. The best option is always to seek help from parents, teachers or your school counsellors. They will be better equipped to advise you on the next course of action or follow-up with the case.