

# Recognising the Signs of Drug Abuse

Drug abuse affects millions of individuals worldwide. It can impact a person's

Knowing the signs of drug abuse can help you identify if someone is abusing drugs, so that you can intervene early and help them break the cycle of addiction.



## Relationships

e.g. strained connections, social isolation



## Mental Wellbeing

e.g. increased risk of anxiety, depression, psychosis



## Physical Health

e.g. organ damage, immune system suppression, overdose



## Behavioural Signs

### Erratic Behaviour

- Aggression, violence, criminal acts
- Unpredictable actions, such as sudden hyperactivity or social withdrawal

### Social Withdrawal

- Avoiding family and friends
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities

### Secretive Actions

- Restricting access to personal spaces
- Evasiveness or dishonesty when questioned about whereabouts or activities



## Physical Signs

### Weight Changes

- Weight loss
- Weight gain

### Ocular Changes

- Constricted or dilated pupils
- Red, bulging or crossed eyes

### Speech Changes

- Rapid and pressured speech
- Slurred or incoherent speech

### Poor Health

- Neglect of personal grooming and cleanliness
- Recurring infections or colds



## Psychological Signs

### Mood Swings and Depressive State

- Intense feelings of euphoria followed by depression
- Increased anxiety, irritability or depression

### Paranoia and Hallucinations

- Visual, auditory or tactile hallucinations
- Delusions or distortions

### Memory and Cognitive Issues

- Poor information retention and recall
- Concentration difficulties



## TIPS FOR INTERVENTION

### 1. Look Out for Sudden Changes

- Changes include sudden shifts in behaviour, physical appearance or psychological state.
- Poor work or school performance could also be a sign, as drug abusers often neglect their responsibilities.

### 2. Pay Attention to Unusual Patterns

- Patterns can be behavioural (e.g. isolation, erratic moods), physical (e.g. hygiene changes) or psychological (e.g. anxiety, depression).

### 3. Act Early

- Early identification of drug abuse is critical for intervention and breaking the cycle of addiction.

