**Take the CAGE* Test**

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**YES to 1 or 2 Questions = Possible Problem**  
**YES to 3 or 4 Questions = Probable Dependence**

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**Help to Stop Using**

**Drug problems can be treated**


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**More Information and Help**

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  Spanish LifeNet: 1-877-AYUDESE (1-877-298-3373)  
  Asian LifeNet (Mandarin, Cantonese and Korean): 1-877-990-8585  
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:  
  www.samhsa.gov  
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**Help to Stop Using**  
**Drug problems can be treated**

For Non-Emergency New York City Services

If you are seeking treatment for a drug or alcohol problem, please call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health.
Anybody can have a drug problem

• Men and women of all ages, ethnicities, income levels and social backgrounds can get into trouble with drugs. Many teenagers, even children, have drug problems, too.

• People often use drugs to relieve stress, escape depression, or treat emotional pain.

• Some people call this “self medication.”

• Self medication seems to work for awhile but in the end it only makes things worse.

Different types of drugs

• Illegal “street” drugs, such as cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine.

• Prescription medicines, such as valium, oxycodone and ritalin.

• Over-the-counter medicines, such as cough syrup, diet pills and sleep aids.

Many people use more than one drug at a time.

• Some people mix illegal drugs with prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

• Often, people who use drugs also smoke and drink heavily.

• Combining different drugs can be very dangerous – even fatal.

What is a ‘problem’?

• A drug problem is any level of drug use that harms the user or places others at risk.

• You don’t have to be physically dependent to have a drug problem. Symptoms of drug problems include:

  • Having work, school, home or legal problems due to drug use.

  • Continued use of drugs despite these problems, or risks to health and safety.

A drug problem often progresses to dependence:

• Craving – a very strong urge to use. May use more than one drug at a time.

• Tolerance – needing more and more of the drug to get the same effect.

• Loss of control – can’t stop or cut down no matter what (health problems, money problems, legal problems).

• Withdrawal – feeling sick when a drug is stopped.

• Blackouts – forgetting all or part of what happens when drinking or using.

• Preoccupation – thinking a lot about getting and using drugs. Neglecting family, friends, work, school.

People who take only prescription medicines can develop dependence, too.

If you shoot drugs, stay safe until you can stop.

1. TREAT OVERDOSE!

• Call 911 FAST and say, “My friend is not breathing, this is an emergency.”

• Do rescue (mouth-to-mouth) breathing.

• Give Narcan (naloxone) if you have it.

• Lay the person on his or her side to prevent choking.

2. Always use a new syringe. Call 1-800-LifeNet (1-800-543-3638) or 311 to find a syringe exchange program.


Tips for Safer Use

Help is available!

Drug problems can be treated.

• Talk to your doctor or a substance abuse counselor. Ask for help to quit.

• Be honest about which drugs you use, how much, and how often – as well as problems that drug use is causing.

• People who are drug dependent may need treatment.

Many options are available.

• Medications to help taper off drug use, ease withdrawal, or prevent relapse. For example:

  • You can get replacement therapy for heroin and other opiate dependence:

    • Methadone is available through many licensed programs.

    • Buprenorphine is a prescription medication that requires only monthly doctor visits.

• Counseling to find ways to avoid drug use and deal positively with underlying issues.

• Self-help organizations, such as 12-step programs with regular meetings that provide a support network.
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There are other things you can do.
Call 311 and ask for “Tips for Safer Use.”

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Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages

For copies of any Health Bulletin

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New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
125 Worth Street, Room 1047, CN 33
New York, N.Y. 10013

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Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

Bureau of Communications
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Cortnie Love, M.F.A., Executive Editor
Drew Blakeman
Cheryl de Jong-Lambert, Senior Writer

Prepared in cooperation with:
Division of Mental Hygiene
Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, Care and Treatment

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New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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