

*Let's Talk*

**ABUSE**

*Drugs and alcohol  
or Domestic violence?*

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# Substance Abuse

<http://www.mohs.co.uk/blog/2012/10/employers-urged-to-call-time-on-workplace-alcohol-and-drug-abuse/>



## What is Substance Abuse and its Treatments?

This booklet is for you, the family member of a person dependent on alcohol or drugs. Whether your family member is dependent on alcohol, drugs or prescription drugs, his or her dependence affects you and your family, too.

This booklet answers questions often asked by families of people needing or entering treatment. Take advantage of help, ask for treatment, ask questions and talk with supportive friends or other family members.

Millions of Americans abuse or are dependent on alcohol or drugs, all of these people have families - so remember, you are not alone. The fact that your family member is in treatment is a good sign and a big step in the right direction. *People with alcohol or drug dependence problems can and do recover.*



## What is Substance Abuse?

Substance abuse is alcoholism and drug dependence and addiction. Most people who drink alcohol drink very little, and many people can stop taking drugs without a struggle. However, some people develop a *substance use disorder* - use of alcohol or drugs that is compulsive or dangerous (or both).

## What Are the Symptoms of Substance Use Disorder?

1. Continued use of drugs or alcohol despite experiencing the negative consequences of heavy drug or alcohol use.
2. Often, a person will blame other people or circumstances for his or her problem.

3. They don't realize that the difficulties result from use of substances.
4. They believe that they drink normally or that "everyone" takes drugs.
5. These false beliefs are *denial*, and denial is part of the illness.

### **Other important symptoms of substance use disorder include:**

- a. **Tolerance** - the need for larger amounts of alcohol or drugs.
- b. **Craving** - a strong need, desire or urge to use alcohol or drugs.  
They will feel anxious and irritable if they can't use them.  
*Craving is a primary symptom of addiction.*
- c. **Loss of control** - a person will use more alcohol or take more drugs than they meant to, or use these substances at a place or time not planned.

### **Physical dependence or withdrawal symptoms**

In some cases when alcohol or drugs is stopped, a person may experience withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, sweating, shakiness and extreme anxiety.

## **What is Substance Treatment?**

### **Who provides treatment?**

Many different kinds of professionals provide treatment for substance use disorders. The main care-givers are specially trained, about a half of these counselors are people who are in recovery themselves.

Many programs have staff from several different ethnic or cultural groups. Most programs assign patients to a treatment team of professionals such as social workers, counselors, doctors, nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists, or other professionals.



## What will happen first?

Everyone entering treatment receives a clinical assessment, this helps treatment professionals offer the *type* of treatment that best suits the individual, this then will help design an effective *treatment plan*. The counselor will gather information:

- Kinds, amount and length of time of substance or alcohol use.
- Cultural issues.
- Effects of use on the person's life.
- Medical history.
- Current medical problems.
- Current medications.
- Mental issues or behavioral problems.
- Family or social issues.
- Legal or financial problems.
- Educational background and needs.
- Current living situation and environment.
- Employment history.
- School performance.
- Previous treatment experiences and attempts to quit.

After gathering this information a *treatment plan* will be developed.

## Medically supervised withdrawal

This procedure is called detoxification or detox. The use of medication will help the person withdraw from the alcohol or drugs. Medically supervised withdrawal can take place at a hospital, or on an outpatient basis with close supervision.

There is inpatient treatment, residential programs, or methadone clinics. During the medical care the patient will begin to receive education about his or her disease.



## What Actually Happens in Treatment Programs?

### Most programs include:

- Assessment
- Medical Care
- A Treatment Plan
- Group or Individual Counseling
- Individual Assignments
- Education About Substance Use Disorders
- Life Skill Training
- Testing for Alcohol or Drug Use
- Release Prevention Training
- Orientation to Self Help Groups
- Treatment for Mental Disorders
- Family Education and Counseling Services
- Medication



## **ABUSE** - *Drugs and alcohol*

### **For more information**

Information taken from,  
"What is Substance Abuse  
Treatment", "A Booklet for Families"  
U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services, Substance Abuse  
and Mental Health Services,  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)  
Call: NCADI at 1-800-729-6686 or  
1-800-487-4889

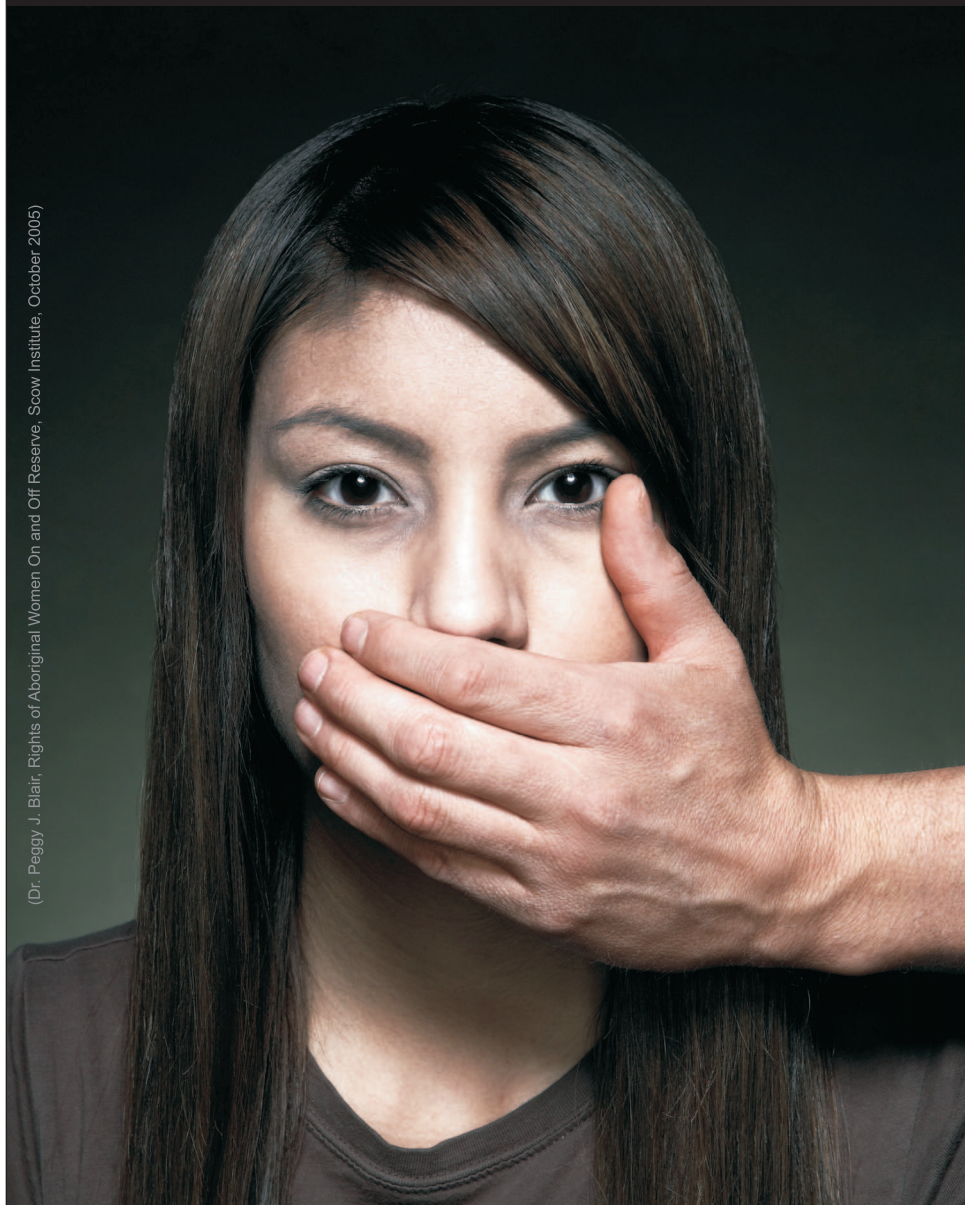
### **Call:**

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters  
1-800-356-9996  
National Drug Abuse Hotline  
1-800-662-4357  
National Drug & Alcohol Treatment  
1-800-662-4357

# Safety for Women

## Domestic Violence Abuses

(Dr. Peggy J. Blair, Rights of Aboriginal Women On and Off Reserve, Scow Institute, October 2005)







## What is Domestic Violence?

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, punching, kicking
- **Sexual abuse** - insisting on having sex when you don't want to or forcing you to perform other sex acts
- **Emotional abuse** - constantly belittling you in front of other people
- **Financial abuse** - keeping such a tight hold on family finances that you always have to ask for money to buy household goods and need to account for every cent you spend.
- **Social abuse** - keeping you isolated from your family and friends
- **Verbal abuse** - belittling, vocal abuse, harming or punishing comments, hurtful comments, threat to harm you physically
- **Digital abuse** - use of technology as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. Often this is also known as verbal or emotional abuse.

Often a mix of these things, domestic violence also includes being threatened with harm to yourself, your children, your pets or your property.

## Choice: to stay and get help, or leave

You were hoping the violence would stop but it hasn't.

- **Contact your local police department**, they can help with the problem or they will give you phone numbers for help in your area.
- **Join a domestic violence support group.**
- **Seek counseling support, for yourself and your spouse.**
- **Talk to your parish priest.**
- **Seek the help of an attorney**, some are free in your area.

**If you decide to leave** there are some things you can do first to prepare yourself. Keep important documents in a safe place where you can get them quickly.

### **You will need:**

- *Identification*
- *Birth certificate for you and your children*
- *Marriage licence*
- *Passport*
- *Driver's licence*
- *Bank books*
- *Tax file no.*
- *Medicare/Medicaid card, children's immunization records*
- *Insurance papers*
- *Keys*
- *Credit cards*

## **For more information call**

Local 911 - for police phone number

Local Women's Shelter National

Hotlines 1-800-662-4357

Domestic Violence 1-800-799-7233

Sex Abuse 1-888-773-8368

Free legal consultation in your area:

[www.legalcorner.com](http://www.legalcorner.com)

1-800-221-6507

[www.ask.com/free+attorney](http://www.ask.com/free+attorney)

The information collected from:

[www.domesticviolence.org](http://www.domesticviolence.org)

[www.strengthenoutsisters.org](http://www.strengthenoutsisters.org)