



SCI-BONO  
DISCOVERY CENTRE  
SCIENCE CAREER CENTRE

## Substance Abuse

Break free from addiction



## What Is Addiction?

The simplest definition of addiction is continued use of a drug (or alcohol) despite harmful consequences.

Addiction is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain; they change its structure and how it works. These brain changes can be long lasting and can lead to many harmful, often self-destructive, behaviors.

## Facts About Addiction

Addiction is a brain disease that destroys lives and tears families apart but it can be treated. Addicts can get their lives back.

Research indicates that 15% of South African citizens have a drug problem, 27% of adolescents use dagga, 35% of them drink alcohol and 29% engage in binge drinking.

### FACT 1:

Different drugs cause different feelings and physical responses.

### FACT 2:

Different people respond differently to the same drugs.

### FACT 3:

The more drugs you take, the more you need.

### FACT 4:

Life is tough enough, but drugs only make it tougher.



## Commonly Used Drugs

The most commonly abused substances in South Africa include alcohol, dagga, cocaine and mandrax. There is also an increasing abuse of legal medications such as ARVs, painkillers and cough syrup resulting in what is referred to as 'silent addictions'.

Commonly used drugs and their "street names" include:

- **Flakka:** A white or pink crystal that is snorted, eaten, injected or vaped
- **Blow, coke or charlie:** Cocaine that is usually snorted or rubbed on gums
- **Rocks, freebase:** A cheap and deadly form of cocaine taken as smokeable 'rocks'
- **XTC, e, Adam, MDMA, Molly:** An ecstasy rave or party drug that enables users to dance all night
- **Whites, buttons:** Mandrax or methaqualone tablets usually powdered and smoked
- **Acid:** An odorless and colourless drug available as paper stamps impregnated with LSD or micro tablets
- **Nyaope, whoonga:** contains rat poison, soap powder and antiretrovirals (ARVs).
- **Mercedes, Mitsubishi, Lacoste:** A white ecstasy-based pill, with a piece of metal wire hidden inside.

## Drug And Alcohol Treatment

Addiction is a treatable, chronic disease that can be managed successfully. Research shows that combining behavioral therapy with medications is the best way to ensure success. Untreated addiction usually leads to a failed life and all too often an untimely death.

**The addict's brain has been hijacked. They are no longer themselves. They want to get their life back.**



## Are You Ready To Get Your Life Back?

**The first step in overcoming addiction is the will to change.**

**Wanting change:** This is the first step towards recovery. Most addicts tell us they want their life back. Their brain has been hijacked by the drugs. They do the very things they do not want to do. Over and over they swear to themselves: This is the last time. But it almost never is without help.

## Can You Break Free From Addiction?

Most people who really want to be free can be. There is, however, only one lasting solution - professional treatment. Where the initial physical aspects of withdrawal are properly managed, and you are also equipped with the necessary skills to cope with life after addiction.

**It takes work but the chains can be broken. The road to recovery is a long and winding one, but the journey to break free from addiction is worth it.**

## What Is Recovery?

Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential. Thus, you are in recovery if you are involved in a process of change that improves your health and wellness, helps you determine your own goals (life direction) and helps you achieve your full potential.

**Recovery comes to those who work for it. Life in recovery is a life well lived.**

## SOS Contacts

**SANCA is an organization that has caring professionals who deal with drug abuse daily: 086 147 2622**

**Life Insight Centre: 072 570 1710**

**South African National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence (SANCA): 011 892 3829**

**Chris Hani Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre: 011 933 0967**

