

Wellness Monthly

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Are You Addicted?

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It is common and easy for people to think they have their alcohol use, substance use, or other activity under control and don't need help. However if you engage these activities compulsively or without control, they can impair your judgment and make it difficult to determine whether you have a problem or are addicted.

If you compulsively seek and use alcohol and/or drugs — or engage in other activities, like gambling, internet use, or sex — regardless of the negative consequences — such as work, family, health or legal problems — you may be addicted. You may also have some of the physical signs of abuse or addiction that vary from person-to-person and with the substance being abused. These symptoms include nausea, sweating, shakiness and anxiety.

A Tool to Detect an Alcohol Use Disorder or a Substance Use Disorder

Alcoholism and drug addiction are serious diseases that need to be properly diagnosed and treated by physicians, psychologists and/or other licensed health care professionals with expertise in the treatment of substance use disorders. A tool health care professionals frequently use to detect substance use disorders is the CAGE+ questionnaire, which includes the following four simple questions:

- Have you ever felt you ought to Cut down on your drinking/drug use?
- Have people ever Annoyed you by criticizing your drinking/drug use?
- Have you ever felt bad or Guilty about your drinking/drug use?
- Have you ever had a drink or taken a drug first thing in the morning as an Eye-opener, to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may have a problem and should contact a health care professional for additional screening and help.

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- 'I'm Not a Bad Drunk, But He Is'



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