We may have to face unexpected disasters in life. Alcohol or drugs can never solve our problems. They may only lead us to more tragic disasters.

**Demand Reduction Programmes**

Increased awareness campaigns shall be organized in different communities and target groups highlighting the hazards of alcohol and substance use; Seminars, workshops, exhibitions, film shows, rallies shall be arranged; Youth and students should be more focused and lessons on the topic shall be included in the educational curriculum. Voluntary Agencies and Faith Organizations should be encouraged to play a vital role in imparting preventive education.

**Counseling, Treatment & Rehabilitation**

Counseling and treatment facility should be provided to those who have already become victims to alcohol and other substances. Rehabilitation programmes should be implemented in specific target groups. Free counseling and treatment facilities should be provided in all Primary Healthcare Centres and Government hospitals.

**What can we do?**

- Create increased awareness about the hazards of alcohol and substance abuse.
- Take strong pledge of abstention from alcohol, drugs or any other intoxication.
- When somebody forces you to use, be bold enough to refuse it politely - Say "NO!"
- Discuss and share problems and feelings with parents, teachers, elders and spiritual leaders.
- Help and prevent friends and relatives from the negative influences of alcohol and drugs.
- Maintain and ensure that your home is always "Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco Free".
- Involve and participate in substance abuse prevention programmes and activities.

**Remember...**

*Your life and future is precious! Think wisely and act responsibly!! The ultimate decision is yours!!!*

---

Developed by:
Alcohol & Drug Information Centre (ADIC)-India
Pattom, Trivandrum - 695004, Kerala
Phone: 0471 - 2551221

Supported by:
World Health Organization (WHO)
India Office, Delhi
Menstrual problems, infertility

Ban on advertisement and promotional

Breast cancer, ovary impairment, alcohol and other substances through

Males

Controlling and Restricting

Sex Organs: Cancer

Among those living in the coastal areas, tribal

What are the Solutions?

Bladder:

Vomiting, gastritis, peptic ulcers

Dysfunction

Hypertension, atheroslerosis, cardiomyopathy, myocardial infarction

Heart:

Oesophagitis, cancer

Poor concentration, defective memory, blackouts, brain damage, cerebellar degeneration, injury to peripheral nerves

1. Brain:

2. Oesophagus:

3. Heart:

4. Lungs:

5. Liver:

6. Stomach:

7. Kidney:

8. Pancreas:

9. Bladder:

10. Sex Organs:

Why should we learn about Alcohol & Substance Abuse?

We live in a world where alcohol, drug and other substances are freely available. Day
to day stress and other unexpected life situations including disasters and tragedies may prompt us to take alcohol and other substances. So it is important to be aware about the dangers of alcohol & substance abuse.

What is Alcohol?

Alcohol is a clear highly volatile liquid with a harsh burning taste. It is available in different forms like toddy, arrack, beer, wine, brandy, rum, whisky, gin, vodka etc., based on its production, strength, flavour and colour. Ethyl alcohol (C₂H₅OH) is the intoxicating substance in all alcoholic beverages and the strength varies in different forms of alcohol. The amount of alcohol in one peg of spirit is equivalent to that of one glass of wine and half pint of beer.

What are Drugs?

Drugs are available in various forms and they are addictive in nature. Most of them may lead to severe dependency. The commonly available drugs are cannabis or ganja and their products (hashish, charas & ganja oil); opium and its products (heroin, brown sugar, smack etc.); prescription drugs such as pethidine, morphone, diazepam, buprenorphine etc. Tobacco products like cigarettes, beedi, pan masala are also commonly used.

Why people use Alcohol & Drugs?

Most of the people start taking alcohol & other drugs just for fun, entertainment or to be sociable. Many are drawn towards by peer pressure of friends or relatives. To satisfy curiosity, relieve boredom, experience pleasurable feelings - these are some of the major causes. Easy availability and ignorance about the health hazards and consequences of alcohol and substance use also tempt several towards it. There are also several myths prevailing in the community, particularly among those living in the coastal areas, tribal colonies and slums that alcohol and drugs will help to relieve pain & trauma, tensions & worries, improve digestion and provide a feeling of well-being.

How do Alcohol & Drugs affect the User?

Alcohol and drugs shortly after their consumption are absorbed fast into the blood and through the circulatory system it reaches the brain, heart and all vital organs of the body creating psychological and physical changes on the user.

Hazard of Substance Use

Physical Problems

Alcoholism and substance abuse has emerged as a major public health problem in our society. It affects most of the organs in the human body.

1. Brain:
   - Poor concentration, defective memory, blackouts, brain damage, cerebellar degeneration, injury to peripheral nerves

2. Oesophagus:
   - Oesophagitis, cancer

3. Heart:
   - Hypertension, atherosclerosis, cardiomyopathy, myocardial infarction

4. Lungs:
   - Chronic chest diseases, carcinoma, pneumonia, tuberculosis

5. Liver:
   - Fatty liver, liver cirrhosis

6. Stomach:
   - Vomiting, gastritis, peptic ulcers

7. Kidney:
   - Dysfunction

8. Pancreas:
   - Pancreatitis, carcinoma, diabetes

9. Bladder:
   - Cancer

10. Sex Organs:
    - Males
        - Loss of libido, impotence
    - Females
        - Breast cancer, ovary impairment, menstrual problems, infertility

Why are Alcohol and Drugs Dangerous?

All substances including alcohol, drugs and tobacco often lead to dependency on the user. Once a person is hooked to alcohol or drugs he develops a strong urge (craving) towards it and requires increased quantity to satisfy his/her craving. This increased level of tolerance often ends up in psychological and/or physical dependency. Such a person is generally known as alcoholic or addict. When the amount of intoxication is reduced in the blood he may develop uneasiness, severe pain, muscle cramps and tremors. This stage is known as withdrawal symptom. In order to overcome the withdrawal symptom he is forced to use increased quantities of the addictive substance and slowly reaches a stage where he cannot survive without the chemical. Such a person so often reaches a pathetic situation in which his whole life is affected which include financial debts, serious emotional and health problems, besides, social degradation. It is very difficult to overcome such a situation.

What are the Solutions?

Controlling and Restricting Availability

Control and restrict the easy availability of alcohol and other substances through effective policies, legislation and enforcement; Ban on advertisement and promotional...