

Any change in health, appearance and/or behavior may indicate substance abuse.

Behavioral Warning Signs

- Depression/lack of motivation
- Wide mood swings
- Irritability or nervousness
- Change in dress or friends
- Inappropriate responses
- Sudden weight gain or loss
- Need for money/valuables missing
- Missing/late for school or work
- Bragging about partying
- Arrogance or grandiosity
- Easily angered or hurt
- DUI arrests/impaired driving
- Projecting false confidence
- Change in sleep patterns
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times
- Dishonesty/excuses/vague answers

Drug paraphernalia, including pipes, bongs, cigars, vials, gauze pads, copper Brillo pads, rolling papers, lighters, eye drops, roach clips, syringes, tourniquets, burned tinfoil or spoons, dryer sheets, air freshener, incense, or towels under the door

Drugs of Abuse

Alcohol

- Red eyes/nose
- Slurred speech
- Impaired judgment
- Inability to process information
- Headaches
- Inability to communicate
- Memory impairment
- Alcohol odor on breath or body
- Decreased attention span
- Inappropriate display of emotions

*Withdrawal: Tremors, sweating, excitability, loss of sleep, seizures **Medical detoxification is required. Potentially dangerous- can be fatal***

Marijuana

- Poor memory
- Bloodshot eyes
- Poor judgment
- Paranoid thinking
- Decreased coordination
- Difficulty concentrating
- Erratic behavior/emotions
- Lack of motivation

Withdrawal: Insomnia, irritability, depression

Cocaine

- Dilated pupils
- Excitability/anxiety/restlessness
- Inability to concentrate
- Repeated sniffing or nose wiping
- Reduced sense of humor
- Nasal congestion
- Compulsive behavior (teeth grinding, hand washing, etc.)
- Forgetfulness
- Weight loss
- Rapid speech/breathing/heart rate
- Euphoria

Withdrawal: Exhaustion, depression, paranoia

Prescription Amphetamines (ADHD Meds)/Methamphetamine

- Dilated pupils
- Weight loss
- Distorted thinking/paranoia
- Perspiration
- Over-reactions
- Cough if smoking
- Other signs similar to cocaine
- Irritability, anxiety, apprehension
- Difficulty focusing eyes
- Alertness/euphoria
- Headaches/dizziness
- Exaggerated reflexes
- Needle marks if injecting
- Rapid heart & breathing rate

*Withdrawal: Exhaustion, depression. For methamphetamine- possible violence, "tweaking" - extreme agitation, paranoia & rages. **Medical detoxification is appropriate***

Opiates (Heroin, morphine, painkillers)

- Increased pain tolerance
- Constricted, "pin-point" pupils
- Nausea
- Decreased physical activity
- "Nodding"- falling asleep while standing or sitting

- Mental clouding
- Impaired coordination
- Reduced vision
- Needle marks if injecting
- Slowed heart rate/breathing
- Depressed appetite/thirst
- Euphoria followed by drowsiness
- Wide mood swings

*Withdrawal: Cold sweats, goose bumps, nausea & vomiting, muscle and bone pain, agitation/sleeplessness ** Medical detoxification is appropriate***

Hallucinogens (PCP, LSD, Ketamine, Ecstasy)

- Permanently damaged mental perception
- Rapid heart & breathing rate
- High blood pressure
- Tremors
- Dilated pupils
- Increased pain tolerance
- Drowsiness
- Repetitive speech patterns
- Blank stare
- Incomplete verbal responses
- Numbness
- Drooling
- Nausea or vomiting
- Suicidal thoughts
- Flashbacks (visual hallucinations)
- Confusion/disorientation/memory loss
- Extreme agitation
- Muscle rigidity
- Thick, slurred speech
- Involuntary eye movement

Withdrawal: No physical withdrawal symptoms; anxiety, depression

Benzodiazepines (Valium, Ativan, Zanax)

- Slurred speech
- Dilated pupils
- Dry mouth
- Lack of coordination/motor function
- Increased appetite
- Sleepiness/extreme sedation

*Withdrawal: Anxiety/panic attacks, insomnia, restlessness/irritability, nightmares, joint pain, headaches, flu-like symptoms, extreme thirst, itchy skin, tremors, seizures, difficulty swallowing, hyper-sensitivity to light & noise, blurred vision, fatigue, fluctuations in body temperatures, dizziness, weakness ** Medical detoxification required- Potentially dangerous- can be fatal***

Inhalants

- Headache, muscle weakness, abdominal pain
- Severe mood swings and violent behavior
- Numbness and tingling of the hands and feet
- Decrease or loss of sense of smell
- Liver, lung, and kidney damage
- Dangerous chemical imbalances in the body
- Brain damage from long-term use
- Permanent damage to the nervous system
- Fatigue, lack of coordination
- Nausea
- Nosebleeds
- Brain damage
- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Death
- Coma
- Decrease in heart and respiratory rates

Withdrawal: Visual or auditory hallucinations, muscle cramps, exhaustion, tremors, anxiety, nausea, aggressiveness, loss of appetite

Steroids

- Rapid weight gain
- Rapid muscle development
- Fluid retention
- Yellow tint to the eyes and skin (jaundice)
- Premature balding
- Impotence
- Oily skin/acne
- Mood swings, depression
- Aggressive behavior/rage
- Bloody noses
- Increased sex drive
- Insomnia

Withdrawal: Sweating, tremors, vomiting, anxiety, insomnia, and muscle pain

Support Groups in Lancaster County:

Alcoholics Anonymous (717) 394-3238

Al-Anon (for family & friends) (800) 671-5994

Narcotics Anonymous (717) 393-4546

Nar-Anon (for family & friends) (717) 285-2909

Provided by Compass Mark
 For information & referral call (717) 299-2831
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