



Guide to Heroin Addiction Treatment

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Get Help Today



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How Do I Know When Someone is Using Heroin?

If you've recently become aware that a loved one is using heroin, or suspect they might be, it's time to take action. It only takes using heroin one time for some people to become addicted. And like all other addictions, early detection and intervention is always the best strategy.

Loved ones addicted to heroin will likely do their best to hide the habit from you. It's important that you know what to look for when trying to identify a problem.



Heroin Addiction Warning Signs

Trance-Like State. If your loved one is having a hard time staying focused and looks like they're falling asleep, that's a classic sign of opiate use. When heroin enters the brain, users feel a strong euphoria, followed by a trance-like state.

Track Marks. These are often found on the inside of the elbow, on the wrist, on the back of the hand, behind the knees or even between toes. Keep an eye out for long-sleeved shirts and other attempts to hide such marks.

Change in Personality. Heroin is the only thing that matters in an addict's life. Family commitments and other people's problems will be ignored, and lying to protect drug use will be normal.

Paraphernalia. If a loved one uses heroin on a regular basis, he will have his own supplies. That could include a little bowl to dissolve the heroin in, needles, lighters, spoons, belts, rubber ties, pipes or foil. Search everywhere. You might be surprised how easily these things can be hidden.

New Friends. If your loved one suddenly starts hanging out with a whole new group (especially if she has no obvious ties with them) that's one of the earliest signs of drug use.

Lack of Interest. Keep an eye out for a loss of interest in favorite hobbies or activities. Grades that have dropped or poor work performance can go hand-in-hand with heroin use as well.

Legal Problems. Theft or other crimes, resulting in legal issues, is common among addicts. They might steal money from your purse, steal your jewelry or take your credit cards.

Long-Term Effects of Heroin Addiction

People who regularly use heroin can quickly develop a tolerance and this puts them at increased risk for a variety of long-term side effects. These include:

- Liver disease
- Lung-related complications
- Collapsed veins
- Infection of heart lining
- Infection of heart valves

Heroin Addiction and Your Brain

It doesn't take long for your brain to become dependent on heroin. The minute it enters your system, your body almost immediately converts the drug into morphine. This morphine binds to opioid receptors in the brain, and that's when intense feelings of well-being, painlessness and extreme relaxation set in.

These euphoric feelings are unlike anything you experience naturally. Your body's dopamine levels reach heights far beyond normal, and just like that your brain begins to change. You lose interest in things that traditionally brought you joy and begin to search for that next fix. Your primary goal is to recreate that same sense of pleasure and relief. Other heroin side effects on the brain include:

Changes in the physical structure and physiology of the brain. This creates long-term imbalances in neuronal and hormonal systems (that are not easily reversed).

Deterioration of the brain's white matter. This may affect a person's decision-making abilities, their ability to regulate their behavior, and how they respond to stressful situations.

Clogging of blood vessels in the brain. Some heroin contains additives that do not easily dilute in the bloodstream.

Decrease in neurotransmitter production. Heroin releases these substances artificially, so the brain is less likely to create its own.

Depressed breathing. Individuals who abuse heroin will likely experience shallow or irregular breathing. As a result, the body (including the brain) receives less oxygen which can lead to



Detoxing from Heroin & Heroin Withdrawal

Detoxing is the process of your body dealing with the lack of a substance like heroin. This can be a difficult hurdle to clear even when you've prepared for it due to the many ways heroin impacts your mind and body. It boosts your dopamine levels sky high. It takes the place of things you previously enjoyed. It's only natural to have a strong mental and physical reaction while your body is adjusting to its absence.

Heroin Withdrawal Timeline: What to Expect

Within 6-12 hours of your last dose, you may begin experiencing early withdrawal symptoms. They generally peak in severity for a couple of days before subsiding over the course of the next week or two.

However, this can vary greatly from person to person. Factors that could impact your timeline (as well as the severity of the symptoms) are:

- Age
- Body type
- Physical health
- Length of addiction
- Amount of heroin used
- Other drugs used



Common Heroin Withdrawal Symptoms

Because heroin often leaves the user feeling euphoric and completely relaxed, there tends to be a lot of anxiety when thinking about life without the drug. Some users may even worry that giving it up could be fatal. While detoxing from heroin isn't usually life-threatening on its own, some of the withdrawal symptoms can have potentially fatal complications. You may experience a variety of flu-like symptoms that range in severity. Some of the possible symptoms include:

- Chills
- Sweating
- Fatigue
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Muscle spasms, cramps and aches
- Intense cravings for the drug
- Rapid or impaired breathing
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Hypertension or high blood pressure

Some of these symptoms can lead to serious complications—even death. The failure rate for those who try to detox on their own is extraordinarily high. For these reasons, it is highly recommended that you seek the help of a detox center staffed by medical and mental health professionals. They will be able to monitor your progress and adjust treatment as needed to ensure the smoothest process possible.

This might sound a bit frightening, but it's important to remember that detoxing and withdrawal symptoms are only temporary. You are freeing yourself from an addiction that can lead to liver disease, collapsed veins, heart and lung problems, brain damage or death. On the road to recovery, you can regain joy and fulfillment from the things that brought you those feelings before heroin addiction took control of your life.



Choosing a Heroin Addiction Rehab Program in California

Watching someone you love struggle with heroin addiction can be incredibly painful. It's important to remember that addiction is a powerful disease. And that the only way to help your loved one overcome their addiction is to get them the help they need. Don't know where to start? You're not alone. Choosing the right heroin rehab center is the first step.

Cycles of Change Recovery Services is California's premier heroin rehab treatment center. Located in Palmdale, our individualized treatment programs are designed to help individuals gain the knowledge, courage and determination needed to live a happy and productive life. Heroin addiction recovery isn't an easy journey, but at Cycles of Change we make the process as comfortable as possible. Alumni will leave our heroin addiction programs with the skills they need to thrive.

Top Questions to Ask Any Heroin Rehab Center

No matter where you or your loved one decides to seek treatment, make sure to ask the following questions to help ensure the best possible outcome:

1. Is my loved one in good hands?

Behind every successful rehab program is a qualified team. At Cycles of Change, our drug rehab staff is dedicated to your loved one's success and recovery. The team is made up of licensed clinical psychologists, family therapists, a medical staff and other industry professionals fully invested in your loved one's journey to life-long sobriety.

We understand that heroin addiction is complex but treatable, and are involved in the recovery process from beginning to end. We work with individuals to develop customized treatment plans designed to address their specific needs.

2. How can I trust my loved one will get the support and help they really need?

There's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to rehab programs. We know that and offer a continuum of care to address your loved one's unique needs:

Sub-acute heroin addiction detox: Detoxing from heroin is a necessary step in the recovery process. Our qualified, experienced and compassionate treatment team is here to ensure you move through your program safely, with the least amount of physical discomfort.

Residential treatment: Our residential treatment center offers individuals a comfortable home where they can escape the stress of everyday life and focus on getting healthy (inside and out).

Outpatient programs: Our partial hospitalization program is a long-term outpatient program that provides individuals with the opportunity to begin adjusting to life outside of the treatment center. They'll go home each night and return each day to receive the full support of our counselors and the benefits of our recovery programs.

Sober living program: Even with relapse tools on hand, temptation in the early days of sobriety can remain strong. We offer a sober living home for individuals who find themselves in this situation. It's a way for those who have completed rehab to transition into everyday life through structure and support in a comfortable setting.

3. What programs do you offer beyond traditional rehab treatment?

Cycles of Change understands the importance of offering a variety of programs to help individuals overcome their addictions in a safe and secure environment. In addition to the more traditional heroin rehab treatments, we offer:

Meditation and yoga: Meditation and yoga therapy help during the changes your loved one will experience in rehab. Later the skills learned here will be effective in reducing stress, relapse prevention and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Psychodrama: Often psychodrama therapy reveals areas of distress that a person has been feeling, but was never able to talk about or admit were contributing to their addiction.

Biosound therapy: These affirmation exercises are positive, stimulating, and an extremely effective means of motivating and empowering our clients to become aware and mindful of the present moment.

Heroin Addiction Recovery Toolkit

While receiving treatment for heroin at our Palmdale, California recovery center, clients also have access to the following resources:

- Nutritional and medical management (including medication management)
- Rehab counseling
- Interactive family programs
- Assessment of medical and psychiatric requirements
- 24/7 on-site medical help and supervision
- Interpersonal relationship development
- Addiction education (how to prevent relapse)
- After care programs and counseling



Even after rehab is complete, Cycles of Change offers heroin relapse prevention support, including ongoing support groups, regular fellowship meetings and wellness resources to promote healthy habits.

Take the First Step toward Heroin Addiction Recovery with Cycles of Change

Cycles of Change, located near Palmdale, is licensed by the State of California as a sub-acute detox center. Staffed with an experienced, compassionate team, we are dedicated to our clients and their families. After detox is complete, our specialized heroin treatment programs can help you or your loved one get back to enjoying life again.

Call us today for an assessment, and we'll develop a comprehensive, customized treatment plan to ensure a safe recovery experience with as little discomfort as possible. If you're ready to take this vital step towards recovery, we're ready to help.

877.854.5784