

# ADDICTIONS

Addiction can be either physical or behavioural, and often they go hand in hand. Though alcohol and tobacco are commonly recognised types of addiction, there are actually hundreds of types of medically and scientifically recognised addictions.



## Physical addictions

are the ones that are generally better known. These are addictions to substances that are ingested or otherwise put into a person's body. Some common physical addictions include:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Opioids
- Prescription drugs
- Cocaine
- Marijuana
- Amphetamines
- Hallucinogens
- Inhalants
- PCP



## Behavioural addiction

is classified as any time that one loses control of their actions in order to engage in behaviours that result in brief feelings of happiness. That person becomes dependent on the pleasurable feelings that come as a result of certain behaviours and begins to compulsively act on that behaviour. Some common behavioural addictions include:

- Food Addiction
- Sex Addiction
- Internet Addiction
- Pornography Addiction
- Using computers and/or cell phones
- Video Game Addiction
- Work Addiction
- Exercise Addiction
- Spiritual obsession  
(not to be confused with religious devotion)
- Seeking pain
- Cutting
- Shopping Addiction
- Exercise
- Gambling Addiction

Addiction manifests itself differently in each person, and signs of addiction vary based on what the person is addicted to.

Drug addiction changes the body, specifically the brain, and can have visible physical side effects.

**Behavioural addiction does not exhibit the same physical symptoms that accompany drug and alcohol addiction or substance abuse. Some signs of addiction that aren't physical include:**

- Significant amount of time spent using substance or engaging in the behaviour.
- Inability to quit using or engaging in the behaviour.
- Inability to fulfill obligations at school, work, or home.
- Relationship or social problems.
- Increased tolerance.
- Withdrawal symptoms upon quitting.
- Previously enjoyed hobbies abandoned.



**Addiction, whether physical or behavioural, impacts many parts of a person's life. Repeated use of substances or repeated behaviours results in physical brain changes, leading to impaired learning, decision-making, memory and judgment.**

**Over time, addiction causes organ damage and increases risk of contracting a communicable disease. Addiction is known to cause depression and/or suicide and affects relationships with family and friends. Legal problems and financial woes are also common issues that result from addiction.**



## Internet Addiction and Mental Health

Excessive use of the internet is known to negatively impact a person's mental health. It has been associated with mental health issues, such as loneliness, depression, anxiety, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Research suggests that people are likely to use the internet more as an emotional crutch to cope with negative feelings instead of addressing them in proactive and healthy ways.

To find out whether you are addicted to the Internet,

**click here** to complete the Internet Addiction Test.

## Need help with addiction?

If you feel you need help with any type of addiction, you are welcome to contact **Platinum Health's Mental Health Services (014 590 1700 or 080 000 6942)** for assistance.

**EAP Counsellors (010 133 0525)** are also available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to offer counselling and support.



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