

Substance Use Disorder



Concerned about your substance use?

The unhealthy use of drugs or alcohol over time can cause changes in your brain that lead to an overwhelming desire to continue or increase your use of the substances. These changes in the brain are part of what makes up substance use disorder (SUD).

What is SUD?

- SUD is a diagnosed mental health condition that causes people to have difficulty controlling their use of alcohol or drugs.
- SUD can cover a broad range of substances, including alcohol, cannabis, opioids, and stimulants.

Meeting you where you are in your recovery

No matter what you are experiencing, treatments and resources are available, and VA is here to help. Talk to a VA provider to learn more about:

- **Preventive care.** To reduce the dangers of substance use, VA offers harm reduction tools, such as the medication naloxone to reverse opioid overdose. Harm reduction helps protect a person's life and well-being while they pursue their recovery.
- **Evidence-based treatments.** These scientifically tested courses of treatment include a range of therapies and medications.
- **Residential rehabilitation.** VA residential rehabilitation treatment offers inpatient residential care and takes a whole health approach to address challenges, including medical concerns and social needs such as employment and housing.

Learn more at MentalHealth.va.gov/substance-use



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