

What is Addiction?

“Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual’s life experiences.”

(American Society of Addiction Medicine, 2019)



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

What is Opioid use disorder?

A problematic pattern of opioid use that causes significant impairment or distress.

A diagnosis is based on specific criteria such as unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control use, or use resulting in social problems and a failure to fulfill obligations at work, school, or home, among other criteria.

(CDC, 2020)



Is Addiction a Choice?

The initial decision to take drugs is generally voluntary. However, with continued use, a person’s ability to exert self-control can become seriously impaired. Brain imaging studies from people addicted to drugs show physical changes in areas of the brain that are critical for judgment, decision-making, learning, memory, and behavior control. Scientists believe that these changes alter the way the brain works and may help explain the compulsive and destructive behaviors of a person who becomes addicted.

(NIDA, 2019)



Can you Treat Addiction?

Addiction is a chronic disorder that can be managed successfully. Research shows that combining behavioral therapy with medications, if available, is the best way to ensure success for most patients.

The combination of medications and behavioral interventions to treat a substance use disorder is known as medication-assisted treatment. Treatment approaches must be tailored to address each patient’s drug use patterns and drug-related medical, psychiatric, environmental, and social problems.

(NIDA, 2019)

