

Paranoia

What is paranoia?

Paranoia is a mental health disorder accompanied by the irrational beliefs that someone or something is out to harm you. These delusions typically involve excessive or irrational suspicion and distrust of others. Intense paranoia can result in homicidal as well as suicidal thoughts.

Methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, alcohol, and ecstasy are examples of just a few drugs that can cause paranoia. Use of these chemicals causes physiological stress that can lead to paranoia, anxiety, or hallucinations.

Symptoms of paranoia should subside once you become sober and start working an active recovery program. If symptoms do not subside, you may have a mental health disorder along with substance addiction. Mental health disorders, such as depression or anxiety, that accompany addiction are called co-occurring disorders. If you think you have a co-occurring disorder, seek help from a counselor or psychiatrist.

In a much milder form, paranoia can be one more example of the “stinking thinking” that is so often part of the alcoholic’s or addict’s mind-set. As users, we tended to take a self-centered view of the world, perceiving events as directly related to us. We can become paranoid about others’ concern for us or paranoid because of the things we did while we were using. Working an active recovery program is a positive way to deal with this milder form of paranoia.