



Maintaining Behavioral Health:

Mentally & Physically



arcare.net | 877-876-8032

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Maintaining Behavioral Health: Mentally & Physically

Chapter 1:

4 Healthy Ways to Deal with Stress	4
--	---

Chapter 2:

6 Signs Your Loved One May Have an Opioid Addiction	8
---	---

Chapter 3:

8 Healthy Habits to Help Combat Depression.....	12
---	----

Chapter 4:

What to Do If Your Family Member is Battling Alcoholism	16
---	----

Chapter 5:

What to Do If You Struggle with Anxiety.....	22
--	----

Chapter 6:

How to Determine If a Loved One Is Struggling with Alcoholism	27
---	----

Chapter 7:

9 Common Signs of Depression	31
------------------------------------	----

Chapter 8:

How to Recognize Substance Abuse and What to Do Next	35
--	----

Chapter 9:

Spotting the Early Signs of Pain Pill Addiction.....	38
--	----

Chapter 10:

Addiction vs. Dependence: The Differences, & Your Drug Treatment Options	41
--	----

Chapter 11:

The Most Common Signs of a Sleep Disorder.....	44
--	----

Chapter 12:

What is Behavioral Health?.....	49
---------------------------------	----

Chapter 13:

5 Common Questions on Opioid Addiction, Answered.....	51
---	----

Introduction

In today's hectic world, it is all too easy to put your negative feelings on the backburner. Though stress, anxiety, and depression are a part of life, they should not be taken for granted. Ignoring these problems can have serious consequences that affect both your mind and your body.

As a healthcare provider in Arkansas, we extol the virtues of prioritizing your well-being and by extension, your health. That is why we at ARcare have made this guide to understanding behavioral health and its most common threats, to help you and those you care about find ways to address the problems at hand, and to get the help you need.

ARcare is a local care provider that has helped Arkansans for over thirty years. Our 44 family practice clinics located throughout the state have upheld our mission to administer medical services to all who need them, regardless of coverage. With board-certified providers, community health centers, and the latest medical technology, ARcare sees individuals of all ages and income levels, and ensures them the highest quality care.

CHAPTER 1:

4 Healthy Ways to Deal with Stress

It is easy to take stress for granted as a normal part of life. The demands of everyday life can make it hard to find time to decompress. However, stress can cause serious health issues if you do not treat it properly. That is why we at ARcare have written this list of simple and effective steps for alleviating anxiety that anyone can find time for.

Take Care of Yourself

Taking care of yourself is a critical step in dealing with stress. It is easy, particularly for parents or people in leadership positions, to prioritize other people's needs before their own. Regardless, you must set aside time to satisfy your needs, too. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [lists positive self care as the first step](#) in dealing with the stress of life.

You can take care of yourself in a few different ways. First, take good care of your body. Stress can affect not only your mental health, [it can negatively impact your physical health](#), as well. With just a few minor adjustments to your daily routine, you can help your

mind and body feel better every day.

Consider walking every day, or cultivate healthy eating habits. You do not have to make any drastic changes overnight. Start by setting small goals and working your way up.

Over time, [your improvements will yield significant changes](#) in the long run.

Find Healthy Ways to Cope

People deal with stress in a myriad of different ways. Some turn to methods that provide fleeting relief but ultimately cause greater long-term damage in their lives.

They may try to self-medicate with alcohol or drugs. Though these unhealthy substances may provide a temporary escape, they ultimately cause greater levels of stress because of their negative influence on your life. Others develop anxious habits, such as nail-biting, stress eating, or even engaging in purposeful self harm.

No matter how anxious you feel, try to avoid coping mechanisms that yield unhealthy side effects. [Psychology Today](#) argues that mentally strong people find healthy ways to cope with their stress. Consider incorporating healthy stress management techniques, like the ones listed below, into your daily or weekly routine:

- Exercise
- Gardening
- Meditation
- Painting
- Yoga

Talk About Your Stress

Another healthy way to deal with stress is to be open and talk about it with others. While it can be tempting to ignore these negative feelings, this can actually be detrimental in the long run. As you experience more and more mental strain, stress can build up, and eventually overwhelm you. Addressing the source of your stress, and allowing others to help you with it, can do wonders for your mental health. Identify people in your life with whom you can share personal things, and let them in on what is making you feel this way.

Talking about stress can not only be cathartic, but provide a new way of approaching its point of origin. Although it may seem odd, there is something therapeutic about saying what the problem is aloud that helps you put it into perspective. It helps you see the issue differently, and helps others better identify solutions with you. Moreover, if you discuss your stress with those closest to you, then someone could offer advice that you may never have considered.

Positive Self Talk

It is important to take ownership over your life, and take control of the way that you live and treat yourself. Being responsible for your own self-confidence is as liberating as it is rewarding. The first step in taking that responsibility is promoting a positive self-image, utilizing what experts call positive self-talk.

While its benefits may seem immaterial, positive self-talk is a powerful way to deal with stress. [Positive words can improve your mood and outlook](#), and can help steer your life in a better direction. So give yourself kudos for doing a good deed for someone, performing well at work, or on a pet project well completed. Likewise, next time an

accident happens, go easy on yourself and find out how you can do better next time.
Your mind and body will thank you for it.

CHAPTER 2:

6 Signs Your Loved One May Have an Opioid Addiction

Opioid addiction has become a widespread problem across the United States. With millions of people currently addicted to opioids, our country faces a truly unprecedented emergency. According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, there are nearly two million people who struggle with pain pill addiction, and the number is growing rapidly.

The Mayo Clinic reports that “up to one-third of people who take opioids for chronic pain misuse them, and more than 10 percent become addicted over time.” With such a high percentage, odds are you may have a loved one who is struggling with dependence. Even if you do not, it is critical to learn the warning signs of an opioid addiction to protect yourself and those you care about. By understanding these signs, you have the potential to initiate an early intervention, giving your loved one the best chance at recovery. This article will seek to provide the six major signs your loved one may be struggling with an opioid addiction, in hopes that you will have the information you need to confront them, and potentially save their life.

Understanding Opioid Addiction

Before you can help your loved one, you need to understand what opioid addiction is. Opioids are painkillers that are stronger than typical over-the-counter prescriptions. While they are a highly effective method of treatment, they can quickly turn into a devastating addiction. These painkillers are only intended to be taken for a specific purpose, and for a prescribed amount of time. Once a person has become psychologically or physically dependent on opioids, they are considered to be an addict. You must understand the severity of this addiction to support your loved one effectively. This addiction can have deadly consequences, and must be treated with urgency. The good news is that there are tell-tale signs of addiction that, if caught early enough, can help you intervene, and get your loved one treated at an Opioid addiction treatment center near you.

Recognizing the Six Signs of Opioid Addiction

1. Lifestyle Changes

You may notice that your loved one has started to make drastic lifestyle changes. While some change is fine, if you begin to notice sudden, extreme changes in your loved one's habits, this could be a sign of potential addiction. Have they started to neglect work or school responsibilities? Have they become secretive, reclusive, or not as open about their life as they once were? Another lifestyle change that can identify a potential addiction is the neglect of life necessities in order to purchase drugs. Have they started selling some of their personal belongings? Some addicts will stop spending money on necessities like food or utilities to fund their addiction. While some lifestyle changes may

not be noticeable, if you notice any drastic changes, you should be concerned and investigate further.

2. Mood Swings

An opioid addict will often experience drastic mood swings. You may notice that your loved one has been acting strangely for an extended period of time. Maybe they have gone from mild-mannered and easy going, to suddenly having problems controlling their anger. Perhaps you have noticed sudden differences in the course of your time spent with them. Do they quickly go from calm to annoyed? If these are uncommon shifts for your loved one, it could indicate a potential problem. This can be a sign of opioid addiction as well.

3. Decreased Energy

You may notice that your loved one has an unusually low amount of energy. One of the side-effects of opioid addiction is drowsiness. Opioids can also cause one to sleep excessively or lose sleep. Either side-effect can impose a low amount of energy. If you notice that your loved one is lethargic or constantly tired, you should note this as a sign of a potential problem.

4. Increased Use of Drugs or Alcohol

Has your loved one increased their alcohol consumption? You may have also noticed that they have increased the amount of pain medication that they are taking. They may start to take painkillers “just in case” they start to feel pain. This is a tell-tale sign of an addiction. Even worse, you may find that they have begun taking or increased their use of illegal or

recreational drugs.

5. Physical Side-Effects

Opioid addiction can cause physical side-effects, as well. You may have noticed your loved one has abnormal or troubled breathing, nausea, or constipation. They may also show signs of confusion or lack of coordination. If your loved one shows signs of these or other abnormal physical side effects, you should investigate further to see if there is a potential problem.

6. Cravings

Addicts will often have unusual or frequent cravings. If you notice an increased craving for drugs, alcohol, or other substances in your loved one, seek treatment for them as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 3:

8 Healthy Habits to Help Combat Depression

In today's world, it is easy to dismiss bad moods, feelings of sadness, or bad days as a fact of life. However, if you feel that a lingering bad mood or fatigue is keeping you from completing your day-to-day tasks, then you may be experiencing depression.

Exercise

Regular exercise can be extremely effective in combating depression. Research suggests that exercise can increase the body's production of natural antidepressants and can be as effective as medication in alleviating depression symptoms.

Physical fitness can seem daunting at first, especially when grappling with depression. The secret to success is to set small, easy goals, and achieve them. Going for a walk, riding a bike, or enjoying any kind of physical activity helps fight the negative feelings you experience.

Diet

What you eat and drink can dramatically affect how you feel. If you continuously give your body an unhealthy fuel source, then it is never going to function properly.

Eating food rich in vitamins and minerals can greatly increase your mood and overall health. Additionally, losing weight can increase your self-esteem, which can also assist in managing depression. Avoid alcohol, drugs, or other substances that can have negative long-term side-effects. Eating healthy will boost your energy and make you feel better about yourself.

Sleep

Sleep is critical to your overall health. Lack of sleep can cause you to feel even more stress, as well as cause greater levels of fatigue. Make sleep a priority, and make sure you get an appropriate amount of it.

A bedtime routine can help you wind down after a long day. Turning off the lights before bed can increase the body's natural production of melatonin to aid in sleep. To that end, you should also avoid screens from televisions, smart phones, and other devices, as they can cause difficulty sleeping, as well.

Laughter

They say that laughter is the best medicine, and when dealing with depression, it can be an appreciated respite. Laughing can greatly reduce symptoms of depression. According to [Everyday Health](#), "Smiling will send serotonin levels soaring, making you feel better

physically and putting you in a happy mood.”

Find a good comedy to watch with friends or maybe a good book. Be creative in finding ways to laugh more. Although it seems so simple, perhaps even silly, laughing more can dramatically help with combating depression.

Meditate

Meditation or prayer can decrease stress and anxiety levels, which can in turn alleviate symptoms of depression. Isolating yourself from distraction and reflecting on your day allows you time to put things into perspective, gather your thoughts, and focus on the positive things in your life.

You may simply sit in silence for a few minutes, or maybe you repeat a meaningful phrase or quote. Another thing that can help is to sit and express gratitude for the good things or people in your life. [Healthline](#) notes that meditation, prayer, or similar exercises can “help you improve your sense of well-being and feel more connected to what’s happening around you.” This can be a quick, simple, and easy way to combat depression.

Volunteer

Depression can often stir up feelings of detachment, inadequacy, and introversion, which can become crushing when you have no one’s opinion but your own. Serving other people can help you gain new perspectives and take your attention away from yourself.

Volunteering can also help you get to know people who may be less fortunate than you

are, which can put your situation into a greater perspective. Serving other people is also an incredibly fulfilling activity in which people often find great joy. Additionally, you may also develop some new relationships with other volunteers.

Cultivate a routine

Depression can cause you to feel like you have no control over your emotions or your life. A routine can help you realize that you have power over your life, which can help you feel more secure. Maintaining a routine can also help alleviate the feelings of dread or insecurity caused by anxiety and depression.

You can start by distributing your time on a calendar. Maybe you can start a morning and bedtime routine to do every day. Although you may not be able to completely control your schedule, maintaining one is an incredibly beneficial practice, and imparts a greater sense of control to those who need it.

Reward yourself

Rewarding yourself with things you enjoy is a great way to help you feel more fulfilled and accomplished. While it can be unhealthy to overindulge, it is important to maintain morale by providing yourself incentive to do your best. Try to reward yourself in fun and healthy ways for nutritional benefits, and to avoid potential guilt, which can undermine the point of the reward.

Start by making regular plans to do things you enjoy. Find a hobby, learn to play an instrument, listen to music, or go for a hike. Invest in yourself, and do the things you love.

CHAPTER 4

What to Do If Your Family Member is Battling Alcoholism

According to the Center for Control and Disease Prevention (CDC), [alcohol abuse](#) causes over 88,000 deaths per year, making it the second deadliest drug in the United States. The U.S. Department of Health and Human services report that alcoholism affects over 17 million people.

If someone you care about is suffering from alcoholism, it is vital that you understand what steps to take to help your loved one. That is why we at ARcare have provided these tips that can help you know what to do when a family member needs you most.

What Is Alcoholism?

Alcoholism is not simply drinking more than you should. [Healthline defines alcoholism](#) as “both a physical and psychological dependence on alcohol.” [Medline Plus](#) suggests that someone may have a drinking problem if they regularly drink more than they intended, cannot stop drinking, or if alcohol is negatively affecting their family, work, or school.

If you notice a loved one is demonstrating one or more of these traits, then it is important that you act quickly.

Being aware of the common signs and symptoms of alcohol abuse can help you to identify alcohol abuse, either in your own behaviors or in the behaviors of those around you.

Alcohol abuse is characterized by alcohol use that impacts the user in negative ways, and can result from frequent heavy drinking. Sadly, alcohol abuse often starts during one's teenage years. Excessive drinking can result in poor health, harmful or fatal accidents, and negative social standing with friends and loved ones.

Frequent heavy drinking increases the body's alcohol tolerance, and often results in serious social and health consequences if left unchecked. Recognizing the signs of alcohol abuse can help you determine if someone you care about needs help to overcome alcohol addiction.

Some common signs of alcohol abuse include:

- Disorientation
- Difficulty standing or walking
- Loss of hand and other body coordination
- Slurring speech
- Repeating statements or rambling speech
- Glassy and/or bloodshot eyes
- Blank stare
- Anxiety or agitation

Short-Term After-Effects of Alcohol Abuse

Although people may drink alcohol to get “buzzed,” the after-effects of alcohol abuse can last well beyond the period of inebriation. Some short-term side-effects of abusing alcohol include the following, among others:

- Headaches
- Breathing problems
- Impaired judgment
- Distorted vision
- Distorted hearing
- Nausea and vomiting
- Blackouts

Long-Term Health Risks of Alcohol Abuse

The effects of alcoholism are much more serious, and can be irreversible—even deadly. Long-term alcohol abuse causes significant damage to the body and mind. All organs are impacted by alcohol abuse, but the brain and liver are often damaged to greater effect. There are many long-term effects of alcohol abuse; chief among them are the ones listed below:

- Anxiety disorders
- Brain damage
- Depression
- Chronic pancreatitis

- Cirrhosis of the liver
- Psoriasis
- Tremors in hands
- Damaged immune system

Helping Your Loved One

Alcoholism can be a difficult situation to navigate. You want to help your loved one, but it is important to approach them the right way. Here are some things to consider when you decide to help a loved one who is battling alcoholism.

Act Fast

Do not wait to address the issue with your loved one. The longer you wait, the greater the chances of their situation becoming more severe. The earlier you can identify the problem and provide help, the more time you have to help them recover.

Pick a Time and Place to Talk

The context of a discussion is important when approaching a loved one about their abuse. Choose a location that will be comfortable for both of you.

These issues are personal, so consider privacy when discussing them. Do not pick a place that serves alcohol, and do not approach your loved one if they have recently been drinking. They need to be sober-minded, and ready to discuss the issue. Try to avoid getting angry or overly emotional during the conversation as well.

Choose your words carefully

Rehearse what you are going to say to your loved one. Avoid accusing, lecturing, or arguing. You are there to help, and you are doing this out of love for them.

Educate them on the [potential risks and side-effects](#) involved with alcoholism.

[MedlinePlus](#) and [Healthline](#) both suggest using “I” statements to emphasize how their abuse is impacting your life and the lives of those around them. Using the right language when approaching a loved one can go a long way in getting them to agree to get help.

Be Ready to Listen

When approaching your loved one, prepare to listen to them, and hear their perspective on the situation. It can be easy to get frustrated and want to lecture them, but you must treat your loved one with consideration and respect if you want them to listen to you. Showing them that you respect and care about them in this way can help them understand that you have their best interest at heart.

Offer Support

Offer to help your loved one once you have confronted them about their abuse. Do not enable them, or take responsibility for their actions. Make sure that they decide to seek help. They need to want to go to treatment for themselves. However, you should offer to support them in any way that you can.

Seek Professional Guidance

[Alcoholism can be treated](#). Seeking professional help is an absolute must when battling

alcoholism. Recovering from alcohol abuse can be extremely challenging, and if not done correctly, can have negative side-effects as well. A trained professional can walk you and your family through the proper steps to ensure a safe and healthy recovery from alcohol abuse.

CHAPTER 5:

What to Do If You Struggle with Anxiety

Anxiety symptoms can be overwhelming and all-consuming. But, you do not have to suffer in silence. Knowing the symptoms of anxiety is the first step to taking effective action.

Living with anxiety can be exhausting. Existing in a constant state of “fight or flight,” (your body’s natural stress response), you might feel an overwhelming sense of nervousness, stress, panic, or even anger in the most common everyday situations.

You are not alone. Nearly [40 million Americans](#) currently live with anxiety.

Like many mental conditions, the experience of anxiety is highly subjective. No two people experience identical symptoms, meaning it can sometimes be hard to pinpoint. Unlike certain physical conditions with a clear set of symptoms and tests, anxiety can have ambiguous, interconnecting physical and psychological symptoms, from panic

attacks to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Furthermore, anxiety can be hard for others around you to understand and respond to. In fact, [research shows that only 25% of people](#) with a mental health disorder feel like others are understanding about their experience.

Some of the most common symptoms experienced by sufferers include:

- A sense of doom, dread, or fear about the present or future
- Avoiding behaviors to get out of social situations
- A rapid heartbeat or heart palpitations
- Sweaty palms or excess body sweating
- Shortness of breath or difficulty controlling breathing
- A preoccupation with what others are thinking about you
- A fear of being judged
- Agitation or anger
- Nausea and/or IBS
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty eating or eating excessively
- Self-medicating to reduce stress levels (e.g. drinking alcohol)

These symptoms can come and go, or might feel like a permanent fixture in your life. Some symptoms may present themselves mildly, others severely.

But, no matter how strong your symptoms, anxiety does not have to rule you. There are

ways to manage anxiety and drastically improve the quality of your life.

Create a Sense of Calm

Many of the physical and psychological symptoms of anxiety can be managed with basic relaxation techniques. Most of these techniques can be practiced anywhere, whether you are on a bus, at a party, or in your bed trying to fall asleep. Meditation, yoga, mindful thinking, deep breathing, and positive affirmations are all methods you can try. If you have access to the internet via your phone, you can find apps and videos that help you enter this state of relaxation no matter where you are. You can also join a meditation or yoga group near you. If you would rather enjoy yoga from the comfort of your own home, there are plenty of online resources available for free. Once you discover a successful method, practice it whenever you feel a surge of anxiety.

Set Small Goals

Anxiety can make it challenging to reach your goals by making them feel overwhelming. This is why people with anxiety tend to procrastinate in the workplace, because their tasks feel too daunting to achieve. In reality, objectives are much easier to complete when you break them down into smaller goals. Reaching one 'mini goal' can feel encouraging, motivating you to reach the second goal. You can do this using a notepad and pen. Simply write down your overall goal, then three or four smaller goals required to complete the overall task. Focus on one small task at a time, and you will soon find yourself becoming more productive at work and at home.

Practice Good Self-Care

Sometimes, anxiety can stop you in your tracks and prevent you from taking care of yourself. You might skip meals, miss social events, stay up late worrying, or isolate for days or weeks at a time. For this reason, if you suffer with anxiety, it is important you become mindful about self care. Make a conscious effort to look after your body and mind, especially when anxiety is peaking. You might enjoy taking a long bath, cooking nutritious food, or simply inviting a friend over for coffee. Remember that poor self-care can worsen the symptoms of anxiety, so it is crucial to keep your needs in mind.

Minimize Anxiety-Inducing Behaviors

While having anxiety is not your fault, there are [some behaviors that can worsen](#) the symptoms. Understanding these behaviors is the first step to reducing the severity of the symptoms. Alcohol consumption, for example, can heighten the symptoms of anxiety. Interestingly, many anxiety sufferers self-medicate with alcohol because it temporarily calms the body. However, these effects are short-term. The overall result from excessive drinking is [increased anxiety and a reliance](#) on further self-medication to rectify the problem. Similarly, too much caffeine can increase anxiety levels, as can high sugar intake.

Exercise is a fantastic way of reducing anxiety levels and balancing your mood. While you may not feel like putting on your running shoes at the height of an anxious episode, this is one of the best ways to minimize the negative feelings, and achieve a healthier outlook for the rest of the day.

Know That Anxiety Is Treatable

You do not have to live with anxiety forever. It is not an innate part of your personality. Often, anxiety is a learned response. Sometimes it occurs after a difficult life event, or as a secondary condition to a physical disease or disability. For example, some people recovering from a serious illness can develop debilitating anxiety about the illness returning. Attending a behavioral health clinic can be the first step to reducing the symptoms of anxiety.

A behavioral health clinic will give you the tools and resources to understand where your anxiety originates from, how it is impacting your life, and ways you can reduce the symptoms and enjoy a happier, healthier existence. You do not need to rely on medications to remove the symptoms of anxiety. Simply talking about the problem and discovering strategies that work for you is enough to make a real difference.

CHAPTER 6

How to Determine If a Loved One Is Struggling with Alcoholism

Alcohol is arguably the most widely used legal substance in America. The latest [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#) found that more than 86% of American adults have had alcohol at one point during their lifetime.

People drink alcohol in times of celebration, in times of mourning, and even to relax after work. While this can be a safe practice if done in moderation, some people's drinking habits ultimately develop into alcoholism. According to the [US National Library of Medicine](#), alcoholism is a disease that causes:

- A strong impulse or craving to drink
- An inability to stop drinking once it has started
- A physical dependence that comes with withdrawal symptoms
- A build-up of tolerance and a need for more alcohol to feel inebriated

Alcohol abuse is a pervasive problem throughout the country. Data from the [National](#)

[Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism](#) shows that more than 15 million adults older than 18 years of age in the US have alcohol use disorder (AUD). Additionally, around 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes each year.

Knowing the warning signs of alcohol addiction can help you determine if someone you know or love has a drinking problem. Once that is established, consider contacting a substance abuse counselor in Arkansas to help you make a plan for your loved one.

How Much Alcohol is too Much Alcohol?

Trying to determine if a loved one is drinking too much is not always an easy task. For the majority of people, moderate alcohol use is not harmful. Binge-drinking and heavy alcohol use, however, are causes for concern when it comes to evaluating alcohol behavior. Binge drinking is defined as a pattern of drinking that elevates the blood alcohol concentration levels to 0.08 g/dL. This is roughly equal to four or five drinks during one occasion for women and men, respectively. Heavy alcohol use is defined by the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration](#) as binge drinking on five or more days during the past month.

Signs of Alcoholism

If you believe a loved one is battling with alcoholism, it is important to catch the problem early and to connect them with a substance abuse counselor in Arkansas as soon as possible. Here are a few tips to help you determine if they are struggling with this disease:

- **Observe the quantity of alcohol.** People build a tolerance to alcohol when it is

abused in large quantities over an extended period of time. If you observe your loved one drinking more alcohol to get the same effects, there is a good chance alcoholism is at play.

- **Consider the time spent on alcohol.** If your loved one spends a large amount of time trying to get alcohol, drinking it, or recovering from the effects, they may be dealing with alcoholism. Drinking early in the morning to start the day or drinking heavily before bed in order to sleep are also problematic signs to watch for.
- **Find out if they lie about alcohol.** People typically do not feel the need to hide or lie about how much alcohol they consume. If you catch your loved one lying about their drinking habits, it is possible they have alcoholism.
- **Pay attention to their interest level in doing things while sober.** If your loved one seems to be distancing themselves from family, work, and recreational activities in favor of drinking alcohol, or because of the effects of alcohol, this is cause for concern. Drinking alcohol excessively often leads to responsibilities being shirked, and old hobbies becoming neglected or given up.
- **Decide if they disregard the consequences of drinking.** Prolonged alcohol abuse is typically associated with negative consequences. If your loved one continues to drink heavily despite the harm it has done to their interpersonal relationships, alcoholism may be at play. They may also get in trouble with the law through charges of public intoxication or driving while under the influence.

Health Consequences of Drinking Too Much

Besides the immediate safety issues of being drunk, there are long-term health consequences to be concerned about. Drinking too much alcohol can lead to high blood

pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, and digestive problems. The risk of mental health issues like depression and anxiety also increases with prolonged heavy drinking.

How to Address Alcoholism Once Recognized

If you recognize alcoholism in your loved one, the best way to help them is to encourage them to seek help at an addiction treatment facility. A primary care clinic may also be helpful, but it is important to note that the process of alcohol detoxification, unlike detox from other substances, can be deadly. Delirium tremens can cause people withdrawing from alcohol to experience restlessness, confusion, or irrational feelings, while also causing physical symptoms like fever, hallucinations, or seizures. This typically occurs among people who drink four to five pints of wine, seven to eight pints of beer, or one pint of liquor each day over the course of several months. Delirium tremens, if left unattended, can lead to cardiac arrest and death.

The path to wellness and a life free of substance abuse varies from person to person, but it all starts with acknowledging the problem and seeking help. Addiction is a chronic disease, not unlike diabetes or heart failure. It requires lifelong treatment and management. Finding a behavioral health clinic near you in Arkansas as soon as possible can help your loved one start their journey to recovery and the rest of their life.

CHAPTER 7

9 Common Signs of Depression

Depression is a mood disorder that can deeply affect all aspects of everyday life, including personal relationships, work or school, and overall well-being. Those diagnosed with this disorder can manage it with the right treatment. The first step is visiting a community health care center to talk to a primary care physician. Knowing the signs of depression can help you recognize them if your loved ones, and ensure that they get the care they need.

Sadness or Hopelessness

Those who suffer from depression tend to develop long-term feelings of sadness or hopelessness. These feelings typically occur on a regular basis, or linger for long periods of time. [Depression can make it difficult](#) to overcome or cope with these feelings, which

can cause them to become more severe over time.

Irritability or Anger

Depression does not always manifest as feelings of sadness. For some people, this disorder can cause them to become angry or irritated over things that might not usually bother them. Even minor issues or annoyances can lead to outbursts of rage in those with depression.

Lack of Energy

People who struggle with depression can have a hard time [finding the energy](#) to do anything, even small tasks. In severe cases, a lack of energy due to depression can make it seem impossible to get out of bed. Those with depression might also feel fatigued as they go about their day, which can cause them to avoid participating in their regular activities.

Unexplained Aches and Pains

Depression can affect more than just emotional well-being; it can also have physical symptoms. Depression can often cause unexplained aches and pains that do not always have an underlying medical cause, such as frequent headaches or lower back pain. Keep in mind that those who have these symptoms should seek care from a provider who offers family medicine in Arkansas first to rule out other medical conditions.

Cognitive Problems

Individuals with depression can find it difficult to focus and complete tasks with high

cognitive demand. They might have trouble making decisions, or concentrating while interacting with others or trying to learn something. They may find it hard to remember things as well, due to the way this disorder affects the brain.

Lack of Interest

When people have depression, they sometimes become withdrawn and stop doing activities that they used to enjoy. Those with depression might stop playing sports, going to movies with friends, working on a favorite hobby, or doing other activities due to a loss of interest.

Mood Swings and Irritability

While feelings of sadness among those who are depressed is common, some people experience other emotions. Depression can cause you to feel angry and irritable, which can lead to lashing out at those around you. You might also have mood swings on a frequent basis.

Compulsive Behavior

Some people who have depression try to cope with feelings of sadness, failure or hopelessness by engaging in compulsive behaviors. These might include using illicit drugs, drinking more alcohol than usual, smoking more, or being careless with money.

Poor Hygiene

People with depression sometimes neglect self-care on a daily basis. If you have been skipping important hygienic habits, such as brushing your teeth or washing your hair,

you might be suffering from depression. This disorder can make these tasks seem as though they require too much effort, especially when experiencing low energy levels. Depression's effect on your self-esteem might also cause you to skip personal hygienic tasks.

CHAPTER 8

How to Recognize Substance Abuse and What to Do Next

Recognizing substance abuse often comes down to understanding and watching for the signs of addiction. Your loved ones may someday depend on your ability to recognize their symptoms, and offer as much support as you can.

In the earliest stages, the symptoms of substance abuse often go unnoticed. Since early intervention offers the greatest chance at reaching a full recovery, noticing the warning signs right away can positively impact the treatment process. Thankfully, there are many telltale signs to watch for when you suspect your loved one may be suffering from addiction. After you identify their struggle with addiction, you can assist them in reaching out to a drug treatment center in Arkansas for help.

The warning [signs of substance abuse](#) start out slow and subtle, and increase in severity over time. Here are a few things to watch for while determining if your loved one is struggling with addiction.

Increased Use of Drugs and Alcohol

Controlled use of prescription drugs, or social use of alcohol, can open the doors for addiction, especially after the body develops a dependency on those substances. If you notice a marked increase in drug or alcohol use, your loved one might be at risk of addiction or already struggling for control.

Appearance or Escalation of Cravings

Cravings are a hallmark sign of physical dependency transforming into full-blown addiction. If your loved one struggles with [controlling cravings](#) for drugs or alcohol, then addiction treatment is the best course of action.

Withdrawal from Normal Activities

Addiction to drugs and [alcohol tend to overshadow activities](#) normally enjoyed by that individual. Your loved one may cancel outings or decline invitations to spend their time obtaining and using the addictive substances.

Inability to Manage Responsibilities

An inability to manage responsibilities occurs as drugs and alcohol affect cognitive function and lead to a disordered lifestyle. You might notice your loved ones missing important appointments or failing to pay their bills as their addiction spirals out of control.

Frequent Relationship Issues

As others suffer negative repercussions from the addiction, your loved one might start to

develop relationship issues with their closest supporters. This is particularly dangerous, [as making a full recovery](#) depends on maintaining a strong network of sober, supportive individuals.

How to Help Loved Ones Suffering from Addiction

Recovery from addiction requires care and support from a skilled substance abuse counselor. The [best thing you can do](#) is help convince your loved one to go to treatment and take back control of their life. From there, be a supportive force for your loved one as they work to regain control and beat addiction.

CHAPTER 9

Spotting the Early Signs of Pain Pill Addiction

Roughly two million people in the United States struggle with an addiction to prescription pain pills, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Recognizing the early signs of addiction can help you avoid its destructive effects in your life.

Prescription pain medications offer an effective way to ease the pain caused by injuries or illnesses, but they can easily be abused. In fact, the rapid increase of people who have become addicted to opioid medications has been widely considered an epidemic. Learning to identify the [signs of a drug addiction to pain pills](#) is a crucial first step toward receiving treatment at a [drug treatment center in Arkansas](#). The following information will help you take action and prevent the [potentially fatal consequences](#) of this condition.

Obsessive Thoughts

Thinking about pain pills, such as how many you have left or when you can take them

again, is considered an early sign of addiction. If you just started taking these pills and are still experiencing severe pain from an injury or illness, wondering when you can take them again is understandable. However, if you have been taking them for an extended period and still find that you fixate on them, this can mean that you are at risk for addiction.

Increased Dosages

When taking prescription pain pills, following your doctor's instructions is essential. If you find that you are taking larger doses than recommended or [taking pain pills more often](#), these can be warning signs of addiction. Be aware of any changes you might have made to the doses you take, as these can increase your risk of experiencing adverse and potentially fatal reactions to these medications.

Decreased Energy

Abusing prescription pain pills can cause strong feelings of lethargy. This loss of energy can make it difficult to participate in your favorite activities and complete everyday tasks. If you struggle to stay physically active, especially if you usually follow workout routines or play sports, this can be a sign of an addiction to pain pills.

Lifestyle Changes

People who become addicted to [prescription pain pills](#) often experience changes in their everyday lives. These medications can cause you to have frequent mood swings or feel more anxious or angry than usual. You might also neglect your appearance and ignore personal hygiene, such as forgetting to shower, or failing to wear clean clothes. Pain pill

addiction can also lead to changes in sleep patterns, causing you to sleep for longer periods of time. You might also become forgetful about your regular responsibilities, such as paying bills or cleaning your home.

According to Narconon, more [significant lifestyle changes](#) can include:

- Purchasing drugs instead of buying everyday necessities
- Selling drugs to fund a pain pill addiction
- Committing illegal acts to steal or buy drugs
- Neglecting work or school
- Displaying secretive behavior to hide an addiction
- Requesting loans or selling possessions to afford a pain pill addiction

These lifestyle and mood changes can develop gradually as addiction grows stronger, so it is important to be aware of them and seek help as soon as possible. Fortunately, drug rehab centers can provide counseling that will help you recognize and correct these changes.

CHAPTER 10

Addiction vs. Dependence: The Differences & Your Drug Treatment Options

The terms “addiction” and “dependence” are sometimes used interchangeably, but they have very different meanings for people who struggle with drug use. If you have recently decided to overcome a drug habit, you may have encountered the words “addiction” and “dependence” while looking for a drug treatment center. Many people who struggle with drug abuse think these words describe the same thing, but their unique definitions play a large part in the type of treatment you should receive. The following information explains [the difference between addiction and dependence](#), and how they can affect your journey to recovery.

What Is Addiction?

[Addiction is a health condition](#) in which you have strong cravings for a certain substance. These cravings occur due to physical changes in your brain after repeated exposure to a drug. These cravings can lead to uncontrolled drug use, which takes a toll on your health, relationships, career, finances, and other aspects of your life. Being addicted to drugs can cause you to engage in self-destructive behavior or make decisions that hurt other people, such as taking dangerous risks or acting in an aggressive manner toward others.

What Is Dependence?

While addiction is classified as a disease, [dependence is a state of being physically dependent on a certain substance](#). Addiction is rooted in your brain, but dependence occurs when your body becomes used to the effects of a drug, and goes into withdrawal if you stop using that substance. The symptoms of withdrawal vary by drug, but they can include severe mental and physical reactions. The more your body adapts to the effects of a drug, the more physically dependent it becomes. This can, in turn, cause you to end up using larger amounts of that substance to achieve the same desired effects.

What Is the Difference?

While [dependence and addiction can be experienced simultaneously](#), it is possible to have one without the other. For example, you can be addicted to a drug without having a physical dependence on it. The good news is that a drug treatment center in Arkansas will be well equipped to handle both of these aspects of substance abuse.

The trained staff at drug treatment centers can help you overcome addiction through therapy designed to help you resist cravings and reverse the impact of drugs on your brain. For example, behavioral therapy teaches you different coping mechanisms and skills you needed to recognize and avoid triggers that lead to drug abuse. You might also receive treatment for mental health conditions that are linked to addiction, such as depression or bipolar disorder.

Treatment for physical dependence involves helping your body adjust to receiving less of a drug until it is no longer dependent. You may go through a detoxification program at

a drug treatment center, which helps you go through withdrawal in a safe environment. As you go through detoxification, you will receive medical care to lessen the effects of unpleasant symptoms. For certain kinds of drugs, such as opioids, you may be prescribed medication that mimics the drug's effects. This allows your body to gradually become used to functioning without the substance on which it was physically dependent.

CHAPTER 11

The Most Common Signs of a Sleep Disorder

If you have trouble sleeping at night, know you are not alone. Sleeping disorders are common—affecting about 50 to 70 million adults in the United States. Knowing the facts about the different kinds of sleeping disorders and what you can do about them is the first step on the road to a better night's sleep.

Categories of Sleep Disorders

There are several conditions that fall under the umbrella of sleeping disorders. These conditions include...

- **Sleep apnea.** Sleep apnea is a condition in which the upper airway is completely or partially blocked, which disrupts regular breathing for short periods of time. This disruption causes you to wake up. When left untreated, sleep apnea can have serious consequences, including high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and other dangerous health conditions.

- **Circadian rhythm disorders.** For the majority of people, sleeping occurs at night. There are a few reasons for this – including normal working hours and daylight. People with circadian rhythm disorders do not follow normal sleeping patterns.
- **Insomnia.** Insomnia is defined as difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up too early in the morning. Insomnia can be periodic or chronic.
- **Narcolepsy.** People who have narcolepsy tend to experience excessive sleepiness, sleep paralysis, hallucinations, and other symptoms.
- **Restless legs syndrome (RLS).** RLS characterized by an uncontrollable urge to move the legs, especially when lying down or sitting. This can greatly disturb one's ability to fall asleep.
- **Snoring.** Snoring is the vibrating sound that happens when the airway is obstructed during breathing. It can be very loud and disturb your sleep and the sleep of those around you.

Signs and Symptoms of a Sleep Disorder

Everybody has had difficulty sleeping at some point in their lives, but there are signs and symptoms you should watch for that could indicate that you have a sleeping disorder.

- **Waking up still feeling tired.** If you sleep for eight hours and still wake up feeling tired and groggy, you may have a sleeping disorder preventing you from entering deep, restorative sleep.
- **Snoring.** In some cases snoring is harmless, but it can also be a warning sign for sleep apnea – a much more dangerous condition that prevents you from breathing

while you sleep. An easy way to find out if you snore is to ask your partner.

- **Daytime sleeping.** Falling asleep during daytime activities, such as reading or driving, can indicate a larger problem. Patterns of excessive daytime sleepiness can serve as a warning sign for an underlying sleep disorder.
- **Continual sleeping issues.** If you normally have decent sleeping patterns but have a period of difficulty sleeping that lasts more than a few weeks, you may have a sleeping condition. Do not assume the problem will go away on its own—speak with your primary care physician as soon as possible about your symptoms before they become chronic.
- **Sleeping is not the only thing bothering you.** Symptoms of another health condition may be keeping you awake, and while that may seem normal, it is possible that there are two different health conditions perpetuating one another. A family medicine specialist can help you determine how best to treat both conditions.

Consequences of Sleeping Disorders

The dangers of bad sleeping patterns go beyond just a bad night's sleep and fatigue during the day. There are serious health consequences associated with lack of restful sleep, including increased anxiety, high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity. Sleep deprivation can also trigger mood disorders and irritability, which can ultimately affect your relationships and employment.

Beyond chronic health risks, not sleeping well can put yourself or others in danger. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, driving while drowsy was responsible for [72,000 vehicle crashes](#), 44,000 injuries, and 800 deaths in 2013—the

most recent year for which information is available.

Treating Sleep Disorders

Once you have established whether you are suffering from a sleeping disorder, you will already be on the right path to a better night's sleep. The ideal treatment option for you will depend on the specific sleeping disorder you are suffering from.

The doctor at your primary care clinic will likely suggest lifestyle changes to improve sleep quality before turning to medications. These lifestyle changes may include:

- Limiting your caffeine intake
- Not smoking at all, and avoiding alcohol before bed
- Not napping during the day, which can help promote sleep at night
- Avoiding stressful discussions and errands before going to sleep
- Keeping your bedroom dark and using eye shades if necessary
- Losing weight loss and improving your diet

If these changes are unsuccessful, other therapies could be appropriate:

- For circadian rhythm disorder, well-timed use of melatonin, a gradual change in bedtime, or bright light therapy
- For snoring, allergy medications may help in reducing blockages in the nasal passageway
- For sleep apnea, a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine can help raise the pressure in the throat and create space for improved breathing
- For RLS, there are prescription medications available to help control symptoms,

including carbidopa-levodopa, clonazepam, gabapentin enacarbil, and pregabalin

There are several different doctors that can help diagnose, treat, and manage your sleeping disorders. A primary care clinic can be your first stop for an initial discussion of symptoms. A neurologist visit may be necessary to rule out other serious conditions, but in most cases, sleeping disorders fall completely under the purview of family medicine.

CHAPTER 12

What is Behavioral Health?

Although the terms were once used interchangeably, “behavioral health” has begun to completely replace “mental health.” With “mental health” on the way out, it is time to take a closer look at its replacement.

In recent years, experts have shifted to using the term behavioral health over mental health in an effort to reduce barriers to care. The hope is that the shift in terms can help to build an inclusive care community by removing the stigma attached to the prior phrase. In addition, the new term highlights the link between behaviors and health effects, especially for those pursuing treatment for addiction. Learning more about this term can help normalize the need for behavioral health care from a local medical clinic in Arkansas.

Common Disorders

Behavioral health practitioners treat a wide range of disorders that affect the mood, social development, or overall mental wellbeing of their patients. These care providers commonly diagnose and treat many behavioral health conditions, including:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Substance Abuse

You will need to undergo a full assessment for your practitioner to identify any disorders causing a disruption in your life. This diagnostic process involves the completion of questionnaires and an interview to review your current symptoms, past health information, and family medical history.

Additional diagnostic procedures like blood and urine samples, MRI scans, and EEG tests are often used to rule out any underlying disorders that could cause similar mental health problems. Once all results are in, your physician will review the information and confirm the diagnosis.

Behavioral Health Treatments

Treatments for behavioral health disorders usually involve a multi-faceted approach to symptom management and elimination. A combination of medication, psychotherapy, and peer support can usually help keep symptoms under control, reducing their impact on your daily life.

Your care providers will want your input in the [treatment planning process](#), so they can find out what does not work and replace it with alternatives. You may need to adjust your treatment plan several times to find the right medication and therapy types that help you the most. Even after achieving wellness, return visits to your behavioral healthcare providers can help you maintain that equilibrium for the long-term.

CHAPTER 13

5 Common Questions on Opioid Addiction, Answered

People who struggle with opioid addiction often have questions about the treatment options available in Arkansas that can help them regain control of their lives. If you are addicted to painkillers such as codeine, hydrocodone, morphine, or oxycodone, you may be looking for drug rehab centers in Arkansas that treat opioid addiction.

First, you should know that you are not alone. The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports that [more than two million people in the United States struggle with addictions](#) related to prescription opioids. Fortunately, there are health care facilities that offer support for Arkansans who are struggling with addiction. The following information explains why opioids are so addictive and answers other common questions you may be asking as you seek treatment.

Why Are Opioids so Addictive?

While they are prescribed to relieve pain, opioids produce a feeling of euphoria that can become addictive. Taking these painkillers frequently, consuming higher-than-recommended doses, or using them for an extended period of time causes changes in your brain chemistry. These changes create cravings and make it hard to resist taking opiates, which can result in increased use. Addiction to opioids can occur when your

tolerance for a drug's effects increases over time, causing you to need more of it to experience the same high.

What Are the Signs of Opiate Addiction?

There are several signs that indicate you may be [suffering from an opioid addiction](#). You should consider seeking treatment at a drug rehab center if you:

- Use opioids more often than prescribed
- Use larger doses of opioids than prescribed
- Use opioids for longer than prescribed
- Experience withdrawal symptoms when you do not take opioids
- Often think about ways to get more opioids
- Notice negative effects of opioid addiction in your life, such as missing work, performing poorly at school, or having problems with personal relationships

What Happens During Opioid Withdrawal?

When you stop taking opioids, your body may experience unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Keep in mind that [these symptoms are temporary](#), and will gradually subside as your body recovers from opiate dependence. Withdrawal symptoms, which can last up to a month in some cases, can include:

- Agitation and irritability
- Low energy levels
- Cold sweats or hot sweats
- Sore muscles
- Nausea and vomiting

- Diarrhea
- Abdominal cramps
- Runny nose
- Watery eyes

Can I Stop Using Opioids on My Own?

While it is possible to stop taking opioids on your own, the process can be much more difficult than if you received treatment at a nearby drug treatment center. Without the proper medical support system in place, some people end up going back to taking opioids to ease the symptoms of withdrawal. If you become fearful of the withdrawal process after attempting to stop on your own, you have a higher risk of continuing to use these drugs.

How Is Opioid Addiction Treated?

The medical professionals who treat opioid addiction do more than simply restrict your access to drugs. Medications are often used to help your body as it goes through withdrawal and adjusts to a lifestyle that does not involve opioid abuse. Medications such as suboxone, methadone, and naltrexone produce the effects your body craves without the negative effects of stronger opioids, allowing you to gradually overcome your addiction. The use of these medications is often combined with counseling to reduce your risk of relapse, and help you adjust psychologically and emotionally during the recovery process.

Whether in times of illness or good health, having a healthcare provider you can trust is an invaluable assurance.

At ARcare, we believe that peace of mind should not be dependant on health insurance.

If you or your family need quality care, regardless of condition or coverage, set up an appointment with Kentuckycare today. Let us help take care of you and your family, so that you can focus on spending time in good health with those you love.

[Book an Appointment](#)

or call 866-608-1834.

