

Think about the possibilities



Recovering from addiction is possible. Scientific discoveries have led to advances that can help.

Addiction is defined as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by out-of-control drug seeking and use, even when that use causes problems. It is considered a brain illness because drugs change the brain. They change its structure and how it works.

Serious health problems can result from this illness. People who suffer from addiction are more likely to have physical illnesses and mental disorders. Substance abuse doesn't cause mental health problems, but addiction and mental illness are often found at the same time.

It's not just health that suffers. Finances, relationships and careers can be ruined. And, the misuse of drugs and alcohol is the leading cause of premature death in the U.S.

Getting help for substance abuse is vital. Many treatments that get results are available. But like every journey, the road to healing begins with the first step. In this case, the first step is seeing the problem.

If you think you, or someone you know, may have a problem, seek help from a doctor or other mental health professional. Don't delay. The sooner you seek help, the sooner you can beat addiction.



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Illinois**



Not What the Doctor Ordered



Don't share prescriptions. Follow doctor's orders.

The nonmedical use or misuse of prescription drugs is a grave and growing problem in the U.S.

Some of the types of drugs that are most often misused include:

- Painkillers
- Sedatives
- Stimulants

There are two groups of people who are most likely to have problems:

- Older adults because they are prescribed more drugs than younger people
- Teens and young adults because they sometimes misuse these drugs to get high, to help them with school work and to treat pain

Many people think that because some drugs are prescribed by doctors they are safe to use without doctors' orders. Or people think it's not necessary to take drugs the right way. But not taking drugs as your doctor meant can result in addiction. It can also be deadly.

Both prescription and over-the-counter drugs pose more chances of health issues when taken with other drugs. Taking any drugs with alcohol can also cause problems. Ask your pharmacist about the chances of drug interactions or if you have other questions.