

# Stages of Drug Use

Each person will experience things differently. However, those who abuse alcohol or drugs will tend to follow a similar path. The stages of drug use and substance abuse are:

## Experimentation.

People will often take drugs the first time out of curiosity. They have heard all about them, and just want to see what the fuss is about. They might also have friends that use these substances and feel peer pressure to join in.

## Regular user.

The individual enjoyed their early experimentation with drugs so has now start to use this substance regularly. Some people will never go beyond this stage of substance abuse.

## Substance abuse

When the individual starts to use alcohol or drugs so much that it leads to harmful consequences. Some will respond to these negative consequences by cutting down or by completely abstaining from the substance. Other people will ignore these warning signs and continue to abuse the drug. It is possible to call substance abuse simply the dangerous use of a substance at a single time, such as binge drinking one time, with particularly horrible consequences. Usually though substance abuse refers to a habit of abuse.

## Dependence

A stage where the individual now feels that they need the drug in order to make it through the day. The consequences of their drug use will have increased, but so will their reluctance to give it up.

## Addiction

When the individual is not only psychologically dependent on the drug, but also physically dependent. Their tolerance for the substance will have increased, and they will suffer withdrawal symptoms should they try to stop.

<http://alcoholrehab.com/alcohol-rehab/stages-of-substance-abuse/>

