

## 6.3: Consequences of Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is a serious public health problem that affects many communities and families in some way. Each year drug abuse causes millions of serious illnesses or injuries among Americans. Examples of abused drugs include:

- [Methamphetamine](#)
- [Anabolic steroids](#)
- [Club drugs](#)
- [Cocaine](#)
- [Heroin](#)
- [Inhalants](#)
- [Marijuana](#)
- [Prescription drugs](#)

Drug abuse also plays a role in many major social problems, such as drugged driving, violence, stress, and child abuse. Drug abuse can lead to homelessness, crime, and missed work or problems with keeping a job. It harms [unborn babies](#) and destroys families. There are different types of treatment for drug abuse. But the best is to prevent drug abuse in the first place.

### How it affects the family

When a person has a drug problem, they have a disease that can hurt the family.

Drug abuse puts a lot of stress on parents, brothers and sisters, children, grandparents—anyone who is part of the home.

When family members take drugs:

- You generally can't count on them to do what they say they will do.
- They may forget or get distracted because their focus is on getting and taking drugs.
- They might lie or steal money to buy drugs.
- They might get fired from their jobs.
- They might not come home at night.
- They may do bad things they would never do if they weren't abusing drugs.

Family members might fight a lot because of the problems the drug abuse is causing. The drug user might do and say things that upset neighbors and friends, and make the family ashamed.

Some people who are addicted don't believe that they are sick and out of control, so they don't look for treatment. They don't see the problems they are causing themselves and those around them. Other people who are addicted are aware of the problem, but may be so upset and confused that they do not know how to ask for or get help.

Drugs don't just hurt the person taking them. Everyone connected to the person can get hurt.

Drug abuse can cause many problems:

- Fighting and violence in and outside the home
- Money problems
- Trouble at school
- Trouble at work, losing a job
- Trouble in relationships
- Child abuse, neglect
- Driving accidents
- Arrests and jail

When you or a loved one abuse drugs, everyday life can feel out of control.

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