

Let's Talk About Addiction

A Guide Just for You



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This guide is for you — to help you understand how to stay healthy, strong, and in control of your own choices.

Every day, you make decisions that shape your future: how you treat your body, how you deal with stress, and how you respond when someone offers you something harmful.

Sometimes people might say, “**Just try it once.**”

But the truth is: even one try can hurt your brain, your body, and your future — and you deserve better than that.

This guide is made especially for you — to help you understand what addiction is, why some people start using harmful substances, and how you can protect yourself and your friends.

No judgment.

No fear.

Just real facts to help you make strong, healthy choices.

What Is Addiction?

Addiction happens when someone starts using something so much that they can't stop, even when it harms them.

Some examples of things that can become addictive:

1.

Vaping

2.

Smoking

3.

Drugs

4.

Other substances

Addiction doesn't mean someone is **"bad"**
It means their brain has changed, and they need
help to feel better.

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How Addiction Affects Your Brain?

Your brain loves things that make you feel good — like sports, friends, hobbies, or success at school. But harmful substances give your brain a quick fake “reward” that isn’t healthy.

Over time:



School, sleep, and relationships can get affected



It gets harder to say “no”



You need more to feel the same

Your brain is **still growing** until about age 25, so it needs protection and care.

Why Do Some Teens Try drugs?

It's not always because they want "fun."
Sometimes teens try substances because:

1.

Their friends are doing it.

2.

They want to fit in.

3.

They feel stressed or sad.

4.

They are curious.

5.

They fake it to look "cool".

6.

They think "just once won't hurt".

7.

They are misled into thinking it will improve concentration or mental performance.

But you are **stronger** than pressure.
You can always choose what is best for you.

What Can Happen If You Use Harmful Substances?

Short-term:

1

Headaches

2

Trouble thinking

3

Bad decisions

4

Mood swings

5

Fights, accidents, or injuries

Long-term:

1

Addiction

2

Memory troubles

3

Sadness or anxiety

4

Problems at school
and studying

5

Hurting
relationships and
trust

6

Harm to your
heart, lungs, and
brain

Your health, your future, and your dreams matter –
protect them.

Myths vs Facts

Myth

I can stop anytime.

Vaping is safer.

Everyone does it.

One try won't matter.

I won't get addicted.

Trying once is safe.

Truth

Addiction makes stopping very difficult.

Vaping can damage your lungs and is addictive.

Most teens don't use harmful substances.

One time can lead to repeated use & harm.

Teen brains are more vulnerable to addiction than adult brains.

Even one try can change your brain and increase addiction risk.

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You Are Not Awkward – Say No

**You can say no kindly and confidently.
Try these:**

“No thanks, I don’t want to.”

“I promised myself to stay healthy.”

“Let’s do something else.”

“Not my thing.”

Walk away

If someone keeps pushing – real friends respect
your choices.

“Don’t Try It – Not Even Once.”

Why You Shouldn’t Try Substances — Even Once

Addiction often starts with ONE try. Many teens who became addicted believed: **“It’s only one time. What’s the harm?”** But that “one time” can change how the brain works — especially your teenage brain, which is still growing.

- It can damage your lungs (vaping), heart, or brain.
- It increases the risk of long-term addiction.
- It lowers school performance.
- It leads to risky decisions.
- It can quickly affect your life in negative ways.

The safest choice is simple:
Don’t start. Not even once.

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Warning Signs You Should Notice

If you or a friend shows these signs, it may be time to talk to someone you trust:

1

Big changes in mood

2

Losing interest in hobbies

3

Skipping school

4

Being secretive

5

Sudden changes in friend groups

6

Trouble sleeping

7

Trouble concentrating

Feeling curious, pressured, or stressed to try a substance “just once”. Talk to a trusted adult. It’s okay to ask for help – **it means you’re strong.**

What to Do If You're Worried About Yourself or a Friend

You can talk to:



A doctor



A teacher



A parent



A trusted adult



A school counsellor

You are not alone.

If you feel stressed or overwhelmed, help is always there.

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Remember This

- **Your brain is amazing — protect it.**
- **You don't need substances to feel confident or accepted.**
- **People who push you to use something are not real friends.**
- **You always have the right to say NO.**
- **Your future is bigger and brighter than any temporary feeling!**

**You deserve a life full of health, success,
and happiness.**