

Further Reading

Drug and Substance Abuse.

Meaning of terms and differences between terms

Medicine and Drugs.

Medicine is a substance in a tablet or liquid form that you swallow or drink in order to prevent and / or cure an illness or disease. **Drug** is any chemical substance other than a nutrient or an essential dietary ingredient, which, when administered to a living organism, produces a biological effect.

Substance refers to any psychoactive substance that can be abused, including drugs like alcohol, cannabis, cocaine, opioids, and stimulants, meaning it encompasses both legal and illegal substances that can be harmful when used excessively.

Substance use refers to the consumption of any psychoactive substance/intoxicating drink/drug, regardless of its controlled status. They include alcohol, nicotine

Drug use using illegal substances, such as heroin, Cocaine, Inhalants, Marijuana.

Drug and Substance abuse is use of illegal drugs or the use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used, or in excessive amounts.

It refers to taking medicine for other purposes that are not medical e.g. using piriton in order to sleep.

Medicine misuse means taking the medicines in a different way than the health care provider prescribed. It includes taking a medicine that was prescribed for someone else, taking a larger dose than you are supposed to, Using the medicine in a different way than you are supposed to. For example, instead of swallowing your tablets, you might crush and then snort or inject them, Using the medicine for another purpose, such as getting high and misusing over-the-counter medicines, including using them for another purpose and using them in a different way than you are supposed to.

Drug misuse-use of a substance/drug for a purpose not consistent with legal/medical guidelines. It has a negative impact on health.

Types of Medicine.

Types (curative, preventive, painkillers, stimulants, depressants)

- **Curative**-are medicine/therapy that cures diseases/relieves pain. Are actions and treatments correcting a harmful/troublesome situation. Examples; antibiotics for bacterial infections, chemotherapy/radiation for cancer, casts for fractures, dialysis for kidney failure, surgery for appendicitis, dietary programs for certain conditions.
- **Preventive**- are used to help avoid diseases and maintain good health. Examples include; immunization programmes for babies, yellow fever, covid 19, tetanus etc. Painkillers- are also called analgesics. They relieve pain. Examples; paracetamol, aspirin, ibuprofen. Stimulants-are drugs that result in increased activity in the body. They speed up messages travelling between the brain and body. They may make people feel more awake, alert, confident/energetic. There are legal drugs like alcohol, tea, coffee and illegal stimulants like cocaine, nicotine
- **Depressants**-are drugs that inhibit the function of the central nervous system(CNS) and are among the most widely used drugs in the world. An agent that reduces a bodily functional activity/an instinctive desire. They reduce arousal and stimulation. They affect neurons in the CNS, which leads to drowsiness, relaxation, sleep, anesthesia, coma and even death.

Forms of drugs and Substance.

- Tablets -Round /oval pills,
- Capsules-round
- Liquids-syrups/solutions/mixtures
- Topical medicine-lotion/ointment/creams.
- Inhalers or aerosol.
- Drops- eye/ear/nose drops
- Injection-powder or solid crystal.
- Natural or herbal.
- Patches.
- Drugs and substances- alcohol, tobacco, marijuana/cannabis(bhanghi), heroine, cocaine, miraa(khat), sniffing glue, psychotropic substances.

Signs and symptoms of drug and substance abuse

- Impaired daily functioning such as skipping hygiene routines.
- Decreased physical health such as sudden weight loss or interrupted sleep.
- Financial strain.
- Mood swings.
- Increased isolation and reduced social interaction.
- Addiction.
- Syringes around.
- Drug containers around where the victim stays.
- Scars on the skin.
- Aggressive behavior.
- Disagreements with others.

Measures of controlling misuse of medicine and drugs in the community)

- The misuse of medicines involves deviating from the basic instructions, giving out medicine with the belief that your illness is similar, obtaining and taking these drugs without a prescription.
- The abuse of medicine involves taking someone's else medicine in the belief that your illness are similar, taking medicine to a point of addiction and using medicine for reasons other than treatment e.g to get intoxicated, procure an abortion or destroy life, that is, commit suicide or homicide.
- Teens and young adults are at risk of abusing prescription medications because they are widely available, free or inexpensive, and falsely believed to be safer than illicit drugs.

The measures of controlling misuse of medicine and drugs in community involves:-

- Legislation and enforcement of laws measures of controlling misuse of medicine and drugs in the community.
- Educating parents and caregivers about the importance of keeping medicine locked up/away from the reach of children.

- Educating the public on proper disposal of old and unneeded medication.
- Sensitizing the teens and caregivers on dangers of misusing and abusing prescription drugs and over-the-counter medication.
- Use of social media to enhance awareness.
- Establishment of rehabilitation and counselling centres for addicts and if possible services be available free.
- Use of posters /pamphlets /notices to create awareness.
- Economic empowerment of the youth and families.
- Observing important days like the International day against illicit drugs and trafficking. This will assist in creating awareness about drug and substance abuse.