

# Digital Mental Health for Addictions

## WHAT IS AN ADDICTION?

An addiction occurs when someone repeatedly engages in a behaviour or uses a substance despite this leading to negative consequences. People can become addicted to anything that activates the reward circuits in our brains - drugs (including some prescription pain and sleep medications), alcohol, cigarettes, gambling, shopping, food, gaming, exercise, or even sex.

People often engage in addictive behaviours to feel good or to stop themselves from feeling bad. However, an addiction often leads to further problems. Getting help from a professional can significantly improve your chances of recovery.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF AN ADDICTION?

### Physical

- Impaired sleep, eating habits or sex drive.
- The effects of intoxication or withdrawal (Find out more at the **Better Health Channel**).
- Frequent cravings or desire.
- Changes in energy levels.

### Psychological

- Feeling out of control.
- Minimising the consequences - "It won't happen to me".
- Thinking about your addiction when you don't want to be.
- Feeling anxious, angry or depressed.
- Fearing you are losing touch with reality (feeling paranoid, hearing things).
- Relationship difficulties.
- Losing interest in other activities.

### Behavioural

- Finding it hard to cut down or stop.
- Using the substance/action for longer periods than you set out to.
- Employment difficulties such as being late to work.
- Not keeping on top of housework or falling behind in responsibilities with children.
- Not paying bills or spending money you have kept for something else.
- Withdrawing from family or friends.
- Driving under the influence or doing other risky behaviours.

## STAYING SAFE WITH DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

If you think you might have a problem with alcohol, benzodiazepines, GHB or ketamine **do not try to stop or cut down on your own**. It can be very dangerous. See your GP for safe ways to cut down - your details will remain confidential.

**Are you pregnant?** There is no healthy amount of alcohol, tobacco or other substances.

If you are unsure or wish to cut down or quit, please check with your GP.

Drinking too much alcohol or taking too much of other drugs can be very dangerous. Taking different types of drugs together can also lead to serious consequences. Find out more on the **Drug Aware** website.

There is no safe way to use illicit substances, as they all create risks for your health and wellbeing. If you do choose to use despite this, please check the following "safer ways to use" guidelines on **Drug Aware** or **Touchbase** websites.

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## DIGITAL SERVICES FOR ADDICTIONS

### Digital Mental Health Gateway

#### Head to Health

#### Head to Health

A website that links Australians to online and phone mental health services, information and resources.  
[headtohealth.gov.au](http://headtohealth.gov.au)



#### My Digital Health 'BDZ digital health'

Psycho-education program to help reduce and gradually withdraw from benzodiazepine use.  
<http://www.mydigitalhealth.org.au>

#### Your Room

Information about alcohol and other drugs.  
<https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/>

#### eClipSE

A series of self-help tools and online programs to address cooccurring depression, alcohol and drug use, and to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of smokers.  
<https://uoneclipse.com.au/ehealth-programs-on-eclipse>



### Alcohol and Drugs

#### Counselling Online

Online, text-based service to communicate with a professional counsellor about your alcohol and drug use, or that of a loved one.  
<http://www.counsellingonline.org.au/>  
1800 888 236



#### National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline

Connect to alcohol and drug information services operating in your state/area.  
1800 250 015



#### Hello Sunday Morning: Daybreak app

An app to help individuals change their relationship with alcohol, with professional and community support.  
<https://hellosundaymorning.org/daybreak/>



#### On Track with The Right Mix

An app to help individuals keep track of their drinking over time.  
Available on Apple Store and Google Play



#### Touchbase (for LGBTIQ+)

Information and resources on substance use, mental health and sexual health in the LGBTIQ+ community.  
<https://touchbase.org.au>



#### Ray's Night Out

App to help youth (16-25 yrs) increase their awareness of their drinking limits and promote safer drinking practices.  
Available on Apple Store



#### Alcohol and Drug Foundation

Information, tools and ideas to reduce the harm of alcohol and other drugs.  
<https://adf.org.au>  
1300 85 85 85



#### Positive Choices

Information on substance use and addictive behaviours.  
[www.positivechoices.org.au](http://www.positivechoices.org.au)



#### Drinks Meter app

An app providing instant, unbiased, and anonymous feedback on your drinking.  
<https://www.drinksometer.com>



#### AOD Knowledge Centre (ATSI)

Information to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reduce their use of alcohol and other drugs.  
<https://aodknowledgecentre.edu.edu.au>



### Cigarettes/Tobacco

#### QuitLine

Telephone coaching for those wishing to quit smoking.  
<http://www.quit.org.au/>  
13 78 48



#### iCanQuit

Information, tips, tools and an online community for smokers and ex-smokers.  
<http://www.icanquit.com.au/>



#### QuitCoach

Online program that delivers personalised feedback and smoking cessation advice.  
<http://www.quitcoach.org.au>



#### Quit Now: My QuitBuddy app

App to support all smokers to quit, featuring tips, distraction tools and a community forum.  
Available on Apple Store and Google Play



### Other Addictions

#### Gambling Help Online

24hr telephone, online and email counselling, support and information for gambling.  
<http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/>  
1800 858 858



#### Smiling Mind: Digital Detox Program

App teaching mindfulness meditation to young people (7-22 yrs) and adults.  
<http://www.smilingmind.com.au/>



#### eSafety Commissioner

Information and advice about online gaming for kids, young people and parents.  
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/staying-safe/gaming>



#### Centre for Clinical Interventions 'Overcoming Disordered Eating'

Self-help workbooks and modules.  
<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/looking-after-yourself>



### Key

Services that also assist people concerned about someone else