

Handout 3-2

Signs and Symptoms: Mental Illness vs. Substance Abuse

Mental illness/ Substance	Signs and Symptoms
depression	Sleep disturbance, sad mood, low energy, suicidality, guilt, hopelessness, inability to experience pleasure
alcohol	Euphoria, slurred speech, loose muscle tone, loss of fine motor coordination, staggering gait, loss of judgment. Impairment of balance, vision, hearing and reaction time. At higher BAC: dysphoria, anxiety, restlessness. Withdrawal: nausea, sweating, shakiness, anxiety, delirium tremens, hallucinations, seizures.
heroin (smack, H, skag, junk)	Euphoria, warm skin flush, dry mouth, heavy extremities, alternately wakeful and drowsy state. Withdrawal: drug craving, restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, cold flashes ("cold turkey"), kicking movements ("kicking the habit").
inhalants (glue, gas, solvents: poppers, bold, rush)	Euphoria, loss of inhibition and control. Complications: hearing loss, limb spasms, heart attack, sudden death. Damage to brain, liver and kidney, bone marrow,
mania	Insomnia, hyperactivity, hypersociability, expansiveness, grandiosity, elation
cocaine (crack, C, snow, flake, blow)	Euphoria, rapid speech, reduced need for sleep or food, mentally alert, restlessness, irritability, anxiety, paranoia, headache, constricted blood vessels, dilated pupils, nosebleeds, intestinal problems, "tracks". Increased temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure. Complications: intense craving, heart attack, stroke, seizure, respiratory failure. Combined with alcohol can cause sudden death.
methamphetamine (speed, meth, chalk, ice, crystal, glass)	Euphoria, wakefulness, increased physical activity, decreased appetite, Complications: shortness of breath, hyperthermia, irritability, insomnia, confusion, tremors, convulsions, anxiety, paranoia, aggressiveness
Prescription drug abuse: stimulants	Increased alertness, attention, increased blood pressure, heart rate, respiration. High doses: irregular heartbeat, fever, heart attack, lethal seizures, hostility, paranoia.
anxiety and panic	Sense of impending doom, intense fear, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, dizziness, sweating, abdominal distress
Prescription drug abuse: benzodiazepines, barbiturates	Calmness, drowsiness, drug dependence. Combined with other medications can cause: heart attack, respiratory problems Sudden withdrawal: seizures
Marijuana (pot, herb, weed, grass, widow, ganja, and hash)	Euphoria, relaxation, dry mouth, rapid heartbeat, loss of coordination and balance, slower reaction times, "red eyes". Long-term effects: impairment in memory, thinking, learning and problem solving; distorted perception.
psychosis	Hallucinations (auditory or visual), delusions, paranoia, social withdrawal, confusion, incoherent or reduced speech, odd movements
LSD (acid)	Intense emotions, delusions, visual hallucinations. Changed sense of time and self, "cross over" sensations, hearing colors, seeing sounds. Physical signs: dilated pupils, fever, increased heart rate and blood pressure, sweating, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, dry mouth, tremors. Long term effects: flashbacks, schizophrenia, depression.
PCP (angel dust, ozone, wack, rocket fuel. Combined with marijuana: Killer joints, crystal supergrass)	Feeling of strength, power, invulnerability, numbing of the mind, drop in breathing, blood pressure, heart rate, nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, flicking up and down of the eyes, drooling, loss of balance, dizziness, seizures, coma. Psychological effects: craving, hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, disordered thinking, catatonia. Behavior: Violence, suicide attempts. Long term use: memory loss, depression, weight loss.