

Observing Mental Health & Substance Use Symptoms

A Training for Shelter & Outreach Providers

A dark blue diagonal graphic that starts from the bottom left corner and extends towards the top right corner, creating a triangular shape in the bottom right of the slide.

Training Outline

9:30-9:45	Introduction
9:45-10:30	Session 1: Group 1 attends MH portion Group 2 attends SU portion
10:30-11:15	Session 2: (groups swap) Group 2 attends MH portion Group 1 attends SU portion
11:15-11:30	Q & A

Signs & Symptoms of Substance Use



Image source: Harm Reduction Coalition



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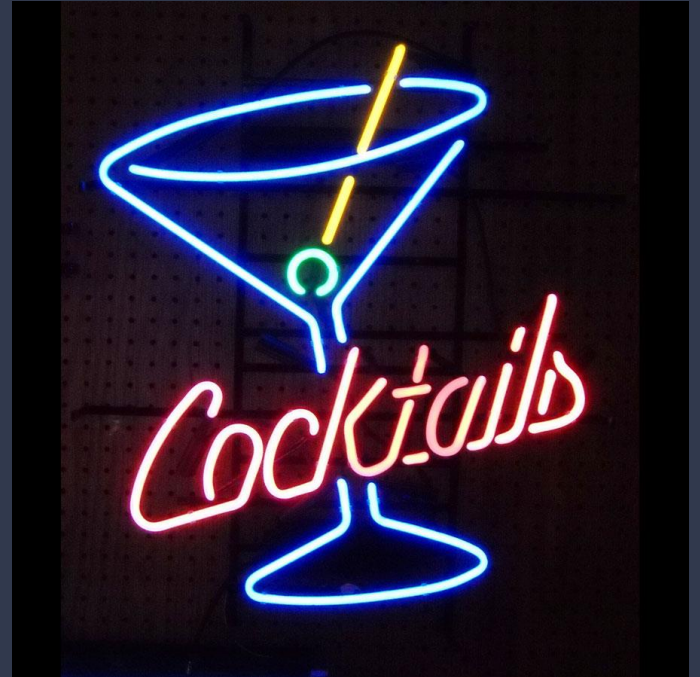
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Potential Signs of Use



Eyes: Pupil Size



Normal pupil



Dilated pupil






Constricted pupil



This person has dilated pupils

Normal pupil size is 3.0 mm to 6.5 mm

Eyes: Pupil Size (cont)

Constricted Pupils	Red Eyes	Dilated Pupils
		
<p>Heroin Morphine Oxycodone Fentanyl Methadone Codeine Hydrocodone</p>	<p>Marijuana Cocaine or Crack Benzodiazepines (i.e. Xanax) Depressants (i.e. Alcohol or Sedatives)</p>	<p>Amphetamines Methamphetamines Cocaine or Crack Hallucinogens (i.e. LSD or mushrooms) Opiates (prescription painkillers) Heroin Marijuana Speed</p>

Eyes: Nystagmus

Involuntary eye movements

- At rest
- When tracking



Eyes: Nystagmus (cont)

Can also be associated with:

- Alcohol
- Cannabis
- Opioids
- Benzodiazepines
- PCP
- And more...

Can also be caused by:

- Head injury
- Congenital (from birth)
- Diabetic neuropathy
- Brain tumor
- Light sensitivity
- Medication side effect
- And more...

Fingers

- Burnt fingers
- Burnt nails
- One nail much longer than others (often a pinky nail)



Skin

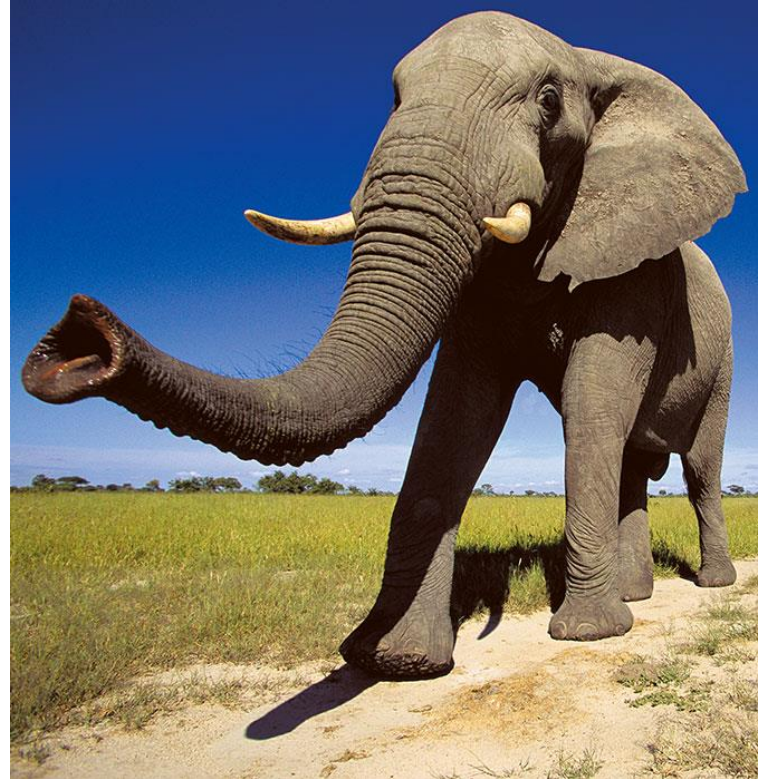
- Burn(s) on lips
- Burn(s) on fingers
- Skin infections
- Strategically hidden skin
- Track marks & bruising
- Reddened nose/face
- Skin discoloration
- Deep / dark under eye circles



The Nose Knows

Which substances might we be able to smell on someone?

- Alcohol
- Cannabis
- Tobacco
- Inhalants



Recognizing Paraphernalia

What
might
you
notice?



Reactions to Questions about Substance Use

Sensitive reactions to being asked about substance use may indicate a history...

Or it may indicate trauma, or stigma related to substance use.





Signs of Use & Withdrawal by Substance

Disclaimer:

By definition, these signs are only *diagnosable* if someone has used a substance recently (or has recently stopped using) and the sign(s) cannot be explained by another health issue. Many signs can also be associated with mental and physical health conditions.



Alcohol

Alcohol Use

- Inappropriate sexual or aggressive behavior
- Mood swings
- Impaired judgement
- Smell of alcohol on breath
- Slurred speech
- Clumsiness, unsteady gait
- Nystagmus (shaky eyes)
- Memory/attention impairment
- Stupor or coma

Alcohol Withdrawal

- Hand tremor
- Sweating, increased pulse
- Nausea, vomiting
- Insomnia
- Tactile, auditory, visual hallucinations
- Psychomotor agitation
- Anxiety
- Light/sound sensitivity

Opioid Use

- Initial euphoria followed by apathy,
- Depressed mood
- Agitated or slowed movements



- Constricted (small) pupils
- Nodding (drowsiness or coma)
- Slurred speech
- Memory/attention impairment

Opioid Withdrawal

- Early
 - anxiety
 - increased respiratory rate
 - sweating
 - tearing
 - yawning
 - runny nose
 - gooseflesh
 - irritability
- Advanced
 - insomnia
 - nausea/vomiting
 - diarrhea
 - abdominal cramps
 - hypertension
 - muscle spasms
 - muscle and bone pain

Stimulant Use (cocaine, methamphetamine, etc.)

- Euphoria or reduced emotional responsiveness
- Changes in sociability
- Hypervigilance
- Panic attacks
- Interpersonal sensitivity
- Anxiety, tension, or anger
- Stereotyped behaviors
- Impaired judgment
- Dilated pupils
- Talkative (speech may be rapid)
- Perspiration or chills
- Rapid or slow heart rate
- High or low blood pressure
- Weight loss
- Paranoia
- Scratching / skin picking
- Sleeplessness
- Increased oral health issues

Stimulant Withdrawal (cocaine, methamphetamine, etc.)

- Fatigue
- Vivid, unpleasant dreams
- Trouble sleeping, or sleeping too much
- Increased appetite
- Slowed or agitated movements

Acute withdrawal (“crash”) often seen after a period of intense use (“binge”).

Suicidality may occur or increase during withdrawal periods.



Caffeine Withdrawal

Cannabis

Cannabis Use

- Red eyes
- Dry mouth
- Increased appetite
- Abnormally rapid heart rate
- Impaired motor coordination
- Euphoria
- Anxiety
- Sensation of slowed time
- Forgetfulness

Cannabis Withdrawal

- Irritability, anger
- Anxiety
- Sleep issues
- Decreased appetite or weight
- Restlessness
- Depressed mood
- Abdominal pain, shakiness, sweating, fever, chills, headache

MDMA Use

- Touch sensitivity, increased touching of self (and other)
- Dilated pupils, light sensitivity
- Blurred vision
- Teeth clenching
- Empathogen response
- Incoordination
- Increased body temperature
- Tremors
- Fast heart rate
- Rapid breath
- Hypertension
- Abnormal heart rhythm



PCP Use

- Aggression, assaultiveness
- Impulsive, unpredictable behavior
- Paranoia, fearfulness
- Anxiety
- Acting withdrawn
- Perceptual disturbances
- Difficulty speaking
- Sound sensitivity
- Nystagmus (shaky eyes)
- Skin flushing
- Sweating
- Dizziness
- Numbness
- High blood pressure
- Rapid heart rate
- Muscle rigidity
- Reduced control of bodily movements



Q & A



Thank you!



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(website coming soon)