

Learn about the disease of addiction, how it affects everyone in the family, and how you can help yourself and your loved one before, during and after drug rehab.



A Family Guide to Addiction Recovery:

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE HAS ADDICTION

Introduction

Do you have a family member or loved one who struggles with substance abuse or a behavioral addiction? You are not alone. It is estimated that 40% of U.S. families have at least one addicted person within their immediate family. Like you, they worry about the best way to help their loved one. Taking steps to guide your loved one into treatment is the greatest gift you can give them, but knowing how to do that can be challenging.

This *Family Guide to Addiction Recovery* was created to answer your questions about addiction, treatment and the recovery process, as well as how the disease of addiction can affect you and your entire family. Why is this happening? What's the best way to break through denial? How do you find the right type of treatment? What kind of support is available for family members? This guide explores these questions and explains how addiction changes your loved one and how, with the right treatment and your support, they can turn their life around.

– *David Sack, MD, Chief Medical Officer at Elements Behavioral Health*

Table of Contents

- 01 How Addiction Works
- 02 How to Recognize the Signs of Addiction
- 03 Types of Addiction Treatment Available
- 05 How to Talk to Someone About their Addiction
- 06 How the Family Can Help an Addicted Loved One
- 08 How to Help an Addict During the Holidays
- 09 What the Family Can Do During Rehab
- 11 What the Family Can Do After Rehab
- 12 How to Deal with Relapse
- 13 Resources: Where to Turn If You Have Questions

HOW ADDICTION WORKS

Why Can't They Just Quit?

One of the most important things you can do for an addicted loved one is understand that addiction is not a choice or a sign of weakness, but a disease over which a person has little control. The American Society of Addiction Medicine defines addiction as “a chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory and related circuitry.” Once addiction takes hold, it changes the structure and function of the brain. This leads to physiological and behavioral changes – changes that are not easily reversed and cause the addicted person to crave drugs – impacting their family, work, finances and other areas of their life.

If you are asking, “Why can't they just quit?” know that many people cannot quit without professional help and support. Professional treatment applies evidence-based scientific approaches to medically detoxify addictive substances from a person's system and rehabilitate them by helping them manage cravings and cope with stressors without reliance on drugs, alcohol or addictive behaviors.

A loved one with a substance use disorder may have inherited a susceptibility to addiction and/or is using alcohol or other substances to manage difficult feelings that stem from trauma or a co-occurring mental health disorder. Sometimes over the course of treatment people are diagnosed with other health issues that can be managed with medical treatment, which enhances their overall healing and recovery.

Addiction Affects the Entire Family

When someone in the home has addiction, other roles in the family shift. For example, a parent may become codependent or enable addictive behaviors. A child may assume “adult” responsibilities, while other children withdraw or act out. You can work through these issues as a family during treatment and recovery.

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO ADDICTION

- Genetics (family history of addiction)
- Childhood trauma
- Stress
- Peer pressure
- Co-occurring mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety
- Lack of family bonds/connections, lack of parental supervision
- Taking highly addictive medications
- Gender (men have higher rates of addiction)

Helpful Links:

- ▶ Addiction as a Family Disease: <https://www.recoveryranch.com/articles/why-we-treat-addiction-as-a-family-affair/>
- ▶ Addiction Is a Brain Disease, Not Moral Failing: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/addiction/addiction-is-a-brain-disease-not-moral-failing/>
- ▶ Addiction Is a Disease and Needs to Be Treated as Such: <https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/02/10/what-is-addiction/addiction-is-a-disease-and-needs-to-be-treated-as-such?mcubz=0>
- ▶ Alcohol and Drug Addiction FAQs: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/addiction-resources/substance-abuse-faqs/alcohol-drug-addiction-faqs/>
- ▶ How Addiction Lights Up the Brain: Dopamine (and Other Neurotransmitters) 101: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/addiction/addiction-lights-brain-dopamine-neurotransmitters-101/>

HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF ADDICTION



Addiction changes your loved one's behavior, which can be shocking and hurtful – turning them into someone you hardly recognize. Sometimes addiction is the obvious cause of the changes, but other times substance abuse is hidden and the changes are so gradual that you aren't quite sure why your loved one is behaving differently.

As painful as it may be to admit that someone you love has an alcohol or drug problem, your recognition of the problem and involvement could be the first step to getting them on a path of recovery. Professional support is available to help you address the issue, identify appropriate treatment options, and figure out how to speak with your loved one about entering a program without alienating them in the process.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF ADDICTION IN SOMEONE YOU LOVE

Realizing that a loved one has a problem with drugs or alcohol and confronting them about it is not easy, but it can mean the difference between getting them the help they need and watching them destroy their life. Knowing the signs of addiction can help you determine whether your loved one needs professional help. Here are some symptoms to look for:

- Isolation and avoiding others, even people who were formerly close
- Changes in choice of friends or hangout spots
- Being secretive about activities
- Missing work or school, or failing to find and maintain steady employment
- Changes in attitude and/or personality, including acting unusually anxious or paranoid, or having sudden outbursts or mood swings
- Lack of motivation, or losing interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Irregular sleeping and eating patterns
- Weight gain or loss
- Paying less attention to personal hygiene
- Financial and/or legal problems
- Unusual smells on breath, body or clothing (depending on substance of abuse)

Helpful Links:

- ▶ Recognizing the Signs of Addiction: <https://www.clarityway.com/treatment/drug-alcohol-detox/signs-of-abuse/>
- ▶ 10 Signs that Your Loved One Needs Addiction Treatment: <https://www.promises.com/articles/signs-you-need-addiction-treatment/>
- ▶ Help for Addiction: Signs That Rock Bottom Is Near: <https://www.promises.com/articles/help-addiction-signs-rock-bottom-near/>
- ▶ Don't Miss the Warning Signs of Drug Addiction in Your Loved One: <https://www.promises.com/articles/drug-addiction/what-are-warning-signs-drug-addiction/>

TYPES OF ADDICTION TREATMENT AVAILABLE

There are many different types of treatment for addiction. It is critical when considering different programs that you choose one that uses evidence-based treatment approaches to give your loved one the greatest chance for success. The Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University conducted a five-year study of addiction treatment in the U.S. and found that only one in 10 people needing addiction treatment actually receive it. Among those who receive treatment, most “do not receive anything that approximates evidence-based care” – that is, care that is backed by scientific research. An addiction treatment program that employs credentialed experts, holds national accreditation (for example, by The Joint Commission) and applies treatment approaches based on scientific research will deliver the best results.

Other types of assistance can be useful for support and recovery, but are not a substitute for treatment. These include sober living facilities that provide a recovery-friendly living environment and check-ins after treatment, and self-help support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) as well as 12-step alternatives like SMART Recovery and Refuge Recovery, which provide accountability and a sober social support network.

HOW DRUG REHAB WORKS

- **Stage 1, Detox:** The first stage of drug rehab is often medically supervised detox, during which evidence-based medications may be used to safely rid the body of addictive substances and manage withdrawal symptoms. Detox typically lasts several days. Because detoxification alone doesn't address the psychological, social and behavioral problems associated with addiction, it should be followed by comprehensive treatment.
- **Stage 2, Drug Rehab:** To produce the lasting behavioral changes necessary for recovery, detox should be followed immediately by drug rehab. Residential treatment (where the addicted person lives at a drug rehab center for a period of time) is typically necessary for longer or more entrenched addictions, if the addicted person lacks a strong sober support network or if they haven't been able to maintain a period of sobriety. Outpatient treatment (where the addicted person lives at home or in a sober living environment while they attend treatment for anywhere from a few hours a week to 6-8 hours per day) may be an option for less entrenched addictions.



During treatment, people participate in individual and group therapy, as well as educational sessions and relapse prevention planning. If a co-occurring mental health disorder like depression or anxiety is present, the client should receive integrated treatment for all issues at the same time. Family counseling may be offered during rehab, and family members should participate as much as possible to offer (and receive) support and begin addressing any dynamics that may undermine recovery. Family involvement in addiction treatment can lead to better outcomes.

- **Stage 3, Aftercare & Recovery:** In drug rehab, people learn to identify high-risk situations that might lead to relapse and develop strategies to handle triggers and cravings. These lessons should carry over to an aftercare plan the client follows as they transition to life after rehab. Many rehabs offer aftercare plans, which may include check-ins, alumni programs, support groups and referrals to resources in the client's home community.

Helpful Links:

- ▶ 8 Reasons Why Medical Detox Is the Only Safe Way to Get Clean:
<https://www.rightstep.com/detoxification/8-reasons-medical-detox-safe-way-get-clean/>
- ▶ The Benefits of Residential Drug Rehab: <https://www.promises.com/articles/benefits-of-residential-drug-rehab/>
- ▶ Local Inpatient vs. Outpatient Rehab: <https://www.rightstep.com/recovery/local-inpatient-vs-outpatient-rehab/>
- ▶ Why Medication-Assisted Therapy Is Critical in Opioid Addiction Recovery:
<https://www.clarityway.com/blog/medication-assisted-therapy-critical-opioid-addiction-recovery/>
- ▶ Dual Diagnosis Treatment: <https://www.promises.com/what-we-treat/dual-diagnosis-treatment/>
- ▶ What Role Do 12-Step Programs Play During and After Drug Rehab?
<https://www.promises.com/articles/12-steps-drug-rehab/>
- ▶ What to Look for in a Treatment Center:
<https://www.rightstep.com/alcohol-and-drug-addiction/finding-addiction-treatment-that-works-what-to-look-for-and-questions-to-ask-when-you-need-evidence-based-treatment/>

HOW TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT THEIR ADDICTION

What finally gets people into drug rehab? Often, it's a talk with a family member or friend who urges them to get help and refuses to give up on them. "Most people enter treatment after an honest conversation with friends and relatives," says David Sack, MD, addiction psychiatrist and chief medical officer at Elements Behavioral Health. "Sometimes that's through a formal intervention, but often it's an informal conversation where the family members confront the individual to talk about what's happening as a result of their substance use and try to convince them that there is a reason to get help."

Staging an Intervention

If the conversation isn't effective, families may want to hire a professional interventionist who can help them stage an intervention. The process typically involves gathering a group of family members and friends to explain to the person how addiction has affected them and set boundaries for the future. The goal is to break through the addict's denial and get them to acknowledge the seriousness of their addiction and the reality that they need treatment. Here are a few tips for staging an effective intervention:

- **Do** make sure you have a clear plan in place before you start the conversation; make admission arrangements at a rehab center in advance
- **Do** time your conversation carefully – it'll be most effective if it takes place soon after a significant upheaval in the addict's life that's a direct result of their drug use, such as a DUI, relationship breakup or job loss
- **Do** include people whom the addict respects and trusts
- **Do** follow through by admitting your loved one to rehab immediately following the intervention, if they agree to get help
- **Don't** allow anyone present to use the intervention as a forum for venting grievances and resentments
- **Don't** veer from the agreed talking points and game plan
- **Don't** make hurtful comments, threaten or blame the addict
- **Don't** let the addict's attitude throw you off course – they are likely to be guarded, defensive or manipulative
- **Don't** forget that your love, genuine concern and desire to help need to be abundantly clear to the addict and set the tone

Helpful Links:

- ▶ Maintaining Strong Boundaries with an Addict: <https://www.promises.com/articles/addiction/maintaining-strong-boundaries-with-addict/>
- ▶ How to Support, Not Enable Your Addicted Loved One: <https://www.clarityway.com/blog/support-not-enable-addicted-loved-one/>
- ▶ 5 Ways to Screw up an Intervention: <https://www.promises.com/articles/5-ways-to-screw-up-an-intervention/>
- ▶ How to Stage an Intervention That Works: <https://www.promises.com/resources/help-family-friends/stage-intervention-works/>
- ▶ How to Talk to Your Addicted Loved One: <https://www.promises.com/articles/addiction-intervention/talk-addicted-loved-one/>
- ▶ Getting Your Loved One into Drug Rehab Treatment: <https://www.recoveryranch.com/articles/getting-your-loved-one-into-drug-rehab-treatment/>

HOW THE FAMILY CAN HELP AN ADDICTED LOVED ONE

When trying to help a loved one into addiction treatment, they are likely to come back with a number of excuses, including “My problem isn’t that bad; I can handle this on my own” or “I can’t take time away from my life/work/family to go into treatment.” What can you do to get through to them, and which approaches should you avoid?



YOU CAN...

- Educate yourself. Addiction is a fearsome foe, and you can’t help your loved one fight this foe unless you understand it. Learn about addiction signs, treatments, relapse triggers and recovery. Education is no guarantee that your help will be welcomed, but it can be a powerful tool in helping you understand and connect with your loved one and what they are going through.
- Talk about it. Talk to your loved one about their addiction and how it affects you. Tell them that you don’t want to judge or accuse them – you want to have a good relationship. Keeping an open dialogue is the best way to be available to them when they need you.
- Take care of yourself. Addiction is painful and exhausting for everyone involved. One of the toughest things for family members to learn is the importance of taking care of themselves, regardless of whether the addicted loved one is doing well or struggling. Even though you try to help your loved one, you can’t control them. Their health and the choices they make are, ultimately, beyond your control. However, you can make healthy choices for yourself and nurture your own well-being so you are able to support your loved one when the going gets tough. Groups like Al-Anon and Nar-Anon provide education and fellowship with others facing similar challenges.

YOU CAN'T...

- Make them quit. If you stage an intervention and are successful at getting your loved one into treatment, this is a huge step forward. However, you cannot force someone with a substance abuse problem to quit or stay sober, even if you support their recovery.
- Do their recovery work for them. You can facilitate their entry into rehab, but they must commit to their sobriety and do the hard work on their own. You can help by maintaining a drug-free home and participating in family therapy, but you have to step back and let them rebuild their life. Like other chronic diseases, the relapse rate for addiction is 40 to 60% so your loved one may need your support through multiple ups and downs.
- Allow addictive behavior to violate your boundaries. Allowing your addicted loved one to violate your stated boundaries destroys your credibility and enables your loved one's addiction. If a boundary is broken, follow through with consequences and say something like "We talked about this and this doesn't work for me" or "I love you but I can't go down this road anymore."

Helpful Links:

- ▶ 3 Things You Can (and Can't) Do to Help an Addicted Loved One:
<https://www.promises.com/articles/addiction-recovery/3-things-you-can-and-cant-do-to-help-an-addicted-loved-one/>
- ▶ Helping Vs. Enabling an Addict: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/addiction/helping-vs-enabling-addict/>
- ▶ 5 Common Objections to Rehab: Excuses for Not Going:
<https://www.promises.com/articles/5-common-objections-rehab-excuses-not-going/>
- ▶ The Difference Between Support and Codependence:
<https://www.promises.com/articles/difference-support-codependence/>
- ▶ 10 Common Ways People Talk Themselves Out of Getting Treatment (That They Really Need):
<https://www.promises.com/articles/addiction-treatment/denial-myths-delay-treatment/>
- ▶ How to Respond When a Loved One Wants to Come Home Early From Rehab:
<https://www.promises.com/resources/medication-treatment/respond-loved-one-wants-come-home-early-rehab/>

HOW TO HELP AN ADDICT DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Holidays can be difficult for families when a loved one has addiction. There is more tension and temptation, which means more triggers to drink or use drugs and heightened risks of relapse and overdose. For these reasons, families may begin thinking about getting a loved one into addiction treatment around the holidays. Is holiday rehab a good idea?

There is never a “wrong” time for someone to get help for addiction. The key is to get help as soon as possible, and as soon as the addicted person is willing. “The best time to get someone into treatment is before the holidays,” says David Sack, MD, chief medical officer at Elements Behavioral Health. “Families may be reluctant to do this because they want to spend time together and also hope that the holiday season will help the addict realize it is time to go into treatment. Unfortunately, it doesn’t usually work out this way and the addicted person more often goes into treatment after the holidays because of difficulties they experienced during them.”

HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW TO HELP AN ADDICT DURING THE HOLIDAYS:

- **Give yourself lots of lead time.** Before Thanksgiving arrives, start discussing how your family will manage the addicted loved one during the holidays. It can be tough to convince someone to get help at this time of year. If the holidays are approaching and your loved one is not managing their addiction on their own, have an honest discussion with them and other family members about how you are going to handle the problem during the holidays. If you are going to get them into addiction treatment, you will need time to plan, prepare and organize treatment at a facility, as well as the discussion or intervention.
- **Set limits for the addicted relative and get buy-in from all family members.** Establish rules for what you are willing to accept and what you’re not willing to accept from your addicted loved one. Put limits in place such as “Unless you agree not to drink or use before you get here or while you’re here, you can’t join us for the holidays” or “We’re not going to give you handouts anymore.” Someone in the family should take a leadership role and contact all relatives in advance to explain these limits and make sure they agree to them. Such limits should include not giving the addicted loved one money and not serving alcohol at family gatherings.
- **Stay close with your loved one without enabling them.** Holidays can be a time when everyone is feeling more forgiving, optimistic and generous in spirit. These feelings can lead to family members enabling the addict or doing things that contribute to relapse. Stick to the limits you have set, but reach out and support your loved one by saying something like “I’d like to drive you to a 12-step meeting when this party is over. Can I do that for you and maybe come in with you?” Offering this kind of support for their recovery is far better than offering the kind of help that can be destructive for an addict, such as “I’m going to give you \$50.”
- **Have a plan in place for if/when things go south.** Everyone wants to be optimistic about the holidays, believing that the addicted loved one is going to be on their best behavior, but reunions and family gatherings are emotionally charged. People remember when they were disrespected by a sibling or had a fight, or how mom liked another sibling best or some other issue that happened in the past. What will you do if these tensions lead to a relapse and/or a blow-out? Put an action plan in place and stick to it.



If a loved one doesn't enter rehab before the holidays, it's not too late. In many ways, the last couple months of the year are the best time to get help. For example, for many people it's easier to get time off from work around the holidays, wait lists at premier rehab centers are at a minimum and many people have met their insurance deductible and will find drug rehab more affordable come year-end. Ultimately, when a person goes to rehab matters less than the fact that they get the help they need and can enjoy happier holidays in years to come.

Helpful Links:

- ▶ The Holidays in Rehab? 5 Reasons to Say Yes: <https://www.rightstep.com/recovery/the-holidays-in-rehab/>
- ▶ Managing the Holidays With a Loved One Who is Addicted:
<https://www.promises.com/articles/addiction/holidays-addicted/>
- ▶ Holiday Season Can Be the Best Time for an Intervention:
<https://www.rightstep.com/addiction-recovery/holiday-season-can-be-the-best-time-for-an-intervention/>
- ▶ Eat, Drink and Be Wary: Tips for Surviving the Holidays Without Family Drama:
<https://www.promisesaustin.com/blog/eat-drink-wary-tips-surviving-holidays-without-family-drama/>

WHAT THE FAMILY CAN DO DURING DRUG REHAB



Get involved! If the drug rehab program includes a family program or family therapy sessions, it benefits your loved one and the entire family to participate. Family programs help loved ones recognize and work through problems that can drive or trigger addiction, and cope with the effects of mental health and substance use disorders in their family system.

Building a Healthy Home: Work on Healing Yourself and Your Family

The best way to save your loved one is to save yourself. Eat well, exercise, do things you enjoy, and consider therapy and/or a support group. Explore Al-Anon or Nar-Anon or other support groups for families of addicts. Al-Anon members report better mental, physical and emotional health and improved daily functioning after attending meetings. In meetings and/or therapy, you'll learn about how family roles change as a result of addiction and how the family dynamics can be healed.

Helpful Links:

- ▶ The Family's Role Before, During and After Drug Rehab: <https://www.recoveryranch.com/articles/familys-role-drug-rehab/>
- ▶ Importance of Self-Care: <https://www.promises.com/articles/5-self-care-habits-family-members-addicts/>

Your involvement is a key factor in your loved one's recovery. Research has found that family and friends are critical to motivating individuals with addiction to stay in treatment. Studies also show that people who successfully complete drug rehab and enter early recovery have more support from family and friends, which leads to greater motivation to change addictive behavior.

GAINING PERSPECTIVE ON ADDICTION

In addiction recovery, there are three guiding principles, known as the "The Three Cs of Addiction," that can help loved ones better understand the disease:

- **I didn't cause it.** As the parent or loved one of an addict, it's important to understand that you did not cause your child or loved one to become addicted. It's not unusual for an addict to blame their addiction on loved ones, but this is simply a rationalization. Understanding this may help relieve any guilt you feel about their addiction, and may also lead your addicted loved one to take responsibility for their own actions.
- **I can't cure it.** Addiction is a chronic disease, much like diabetes. This means an addicted person can learn to manage the disease, but will need to remain vigilant to stay sober and guard against relapse. Even the best drug rehab program in the world cannot cure addiction. However, with a solid aftercare plan that includes relapse prevention strategies and a strong sober support system, the addict will have a firm foundation for recovery.
- **I can't control it.** Addictive substances alter the brain's chemistry, leading to drug cravings and altering an individual's rational thinking and, thus, their actions. Due to these mental and physical changes, neither you nor your loved one can control addiction. Addiction treatment is the best way to rehabilitate the individual's mental, physical and behavioral health so they can begin to regain some control over their life.

WHAT THE FAMILY CAN DO AFTER REHAB



During drug rehab, counselors work with clients to develop an aftercare plan to facilitate a smooth return to life after rehab. Make yourself familiar with your loved one's aftercare plan, which will include individualized recommendations for continued counseling, sober support and other care from service providers or networks in the community. It will also include relapse prevention strategies, including the people, places and things your loved one should avoid because these are triggers for them to drink or use again. Your addicted loved one needs to commit to the plan and do the work themselves, but you can help by eliminating or minimizing triggers at home and within the family, and by encouraging meeting attendance and other sober activities.

Recovery is challenging. The first weeks after rehab are particularly difficult as your loved one adjusts to life outside the safe, structured environment of rehab. Sobriety must be your loved one's top priority so give them space and encouragement to work their recovery program, even if it means that they might miss important family events.

To help a loved one through the recovery process, each family member can:

- Stay involved without hovering or interfering
- Be supportive, but not controlling
- Participate in family counseling with your loved one
- Celebrate recovery milestones
- Examine how family dynamics/lifestyle could improve
- Commit to your loved one's aftercare program as a family
- Learn about rescue medications in case of drug overdose
- Remain vigilant for signs of relapse and the need for additional treatment

In the early days of recovery, family members might accompany their loved one to 12-step meetings or go to counseling to mend relationships. If you have been managing your loved one's financial or legal affairs while they were in rehab, now is the time to gradually transition some responsibilities back to them.

Remember, addiction is a family disease that deeply affects every individual involved. By helping your loved one get treatment and educating yourself about addiction and how you and your family are impacted by it, you have taken an important first step toward recovery.

STAGES OF CHANGE IN ADDICTION RECOVERY FOR FAMILIES

According to research, the stages of change for families during and after rehab include:

1. Attainment of sobriety: The family system is unbalanced but healthy change is possible.
2. Adjustment to sobriety: The family works on developing and stabilizing a new system.
3. Long-term maintenance of sobriety: The family rebalances and stabilizes a new and healthier lifestyle.

Helpful Links:

- ▶ The First Year in Recovery: Stages and What to Expect:
<https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/addiction-resources/recovery-life-rehab/first-year-recovery-stages-expect/>

HOW TO DEAL WITH RELAPSE

Though slip-ups are not a foregone conclusion for everyone who struggles with addiction, research from the National Institute on Drug Abuse reveals that relapse rates for drug addiction range from 40% to 60%. Rates of relapse are lower for people who complete long-term treatment programs that include behavioral therapy and relapse prevention, aftercare and monitoring.

Yet, even when people in recovery follow their aftercare plan and seem committed to recovery, relapses can happen. It can be heartbreaking when someone you love relapses, crushing the hope and joy you felt in the belief they had conquered their addiction.

Should you have seen the signs that they were slipping? Could you have shielded them from triggers or stepped in sooner and done more? Even if you recognized early warning signs that your loved one was heading for relapse, you can't get sober for them. No matter how much you encourage them to stay on course with their recovery program – even if you plead, push, beg or threaten consequences – they are the ones who must do the work. Trying to control a situation over which you are powerless brings stress and a sense of defeat. So what can you do?

WHAT FAMILIES CAN DO IF RELAPSE HAPPENS

- **Exert your influence by setting healthy limits.** Let your loved one know that you see they have relapsed and will assist them in getting help, but you won't enable their substance abuse.
- **Learn about relapse. Educate yourself about relapse triggers.** Remember, you're not the only one baffled and devastated by relapse – your loved one is likely feeling intense shame and may react by denying the problem or pulling away from you.
- **Get them back on track with a relapse intervention.** You can call your loved one's sponsor for help or connect with an interventionist. A relapse intervention doesn't always result in the addicted person immediately agreeing to get back into treatment, but it may plant the seed.
- **Don't characterize the relapse as a failure.** Relapse doesn't mean treatment wasn't effective. It's a reminder that addiction is a chronic disease and, like other diseases, it may go into remission when managed, but it never goes away. Help your loved one view relapse as a sign that they need to reinstate treatment or get help making a course correction in their relapse-prevention plan to get back on the road to recovery.
- **Don't berate yourself.** Blaming yourself or letting your own self-care slide is easy to do during the stress and turmoil of relapse. But, your loved one's relapse doesn't mean you should give up hope. Millions of addicts in long-term recovery relapsed multiple times before finding their way. Your loved one can get there. In the meantime, take care of yourself, seek professional help and attend Al-anon or other support groups to connect with others who understand this struggle.

Helpful Links:

- ▶ 3 Things You Shouldn't Do If Your Loved One Relapses:
<https://www.recoveryranch.com/recovery/3-things-you-shouldnt-do-if-your-loved-one-relapses/>
- ▶ 4 Things to Remember When Dealing with a Loved One's Relapse:
<https://www.promises.com/recovery/4-things-remember-dealing-loved-ones-relapse/>
- ▶ Bend or Break: When to Keep or Adjust Your Boundaries in the Face of Their Relapse:
<https://www.rightstep.com/addiction/bend-break-keep-adjust-boundaries-face-relapse/>

RESOURCES: WHERE TO TURN IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

There is no greater gift you can give an addicted loved one than your support and help in getting them into treatment for substance abuse. The process can be challenging, but your efforts to understand addiction and your dedication and commitment to their recovery is a gift worth giving. All of us at Elements Behavioral Health are here to help you give that gift.

We hope you use this Family Guide as a handbook for understanding your addicted loved one, getting them into treatment and supporting them through their recovery. We have walked this road with many families, and we understand the difficulties you are facing. We've also seen families go on to enjoy rich, fulfilling lives with their loved one in recovery.

Don't wait to get help for a loved one. Call to speak to an Elements Behavioral Health recovery specialist at: **888.317.3720**

About Elements Behavioral Health

Elements Behavioral Health is led by an experienced team of professionals who are passionate about improving the lives of those struggling with addiction and mental health disorders. Our treatment centers are committed to providing the highest quality clinical care. Utilizing the latest evidence-based approaches, cutting-edge therapies and specialized programming tailored to our clients' needs, we help people build the resilience and skills they need to heal. Our focus is on long-term, sustainable recovery and overall improvement in quality of life.

We've got you covered.

Whether your loved one is struggling with addiction, emotional trauma, depression or anxiety, an eating disorder or intimacy disorder, or co-occurring issues, Elements Behavioral Health has highly effective treatment programs to meet your needs. Our programs offer a wide range of treatment approaches such as:

- Medical detox, residential and outpatient programs
- Individual, group and family therapy
- Relapse prevention counseling
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)
- EMDR, Somatic Experiencing and other trauma therapies
- Equine therapy
- Psychodrama
- Motivational interviewing
- 12-step options and 12-step alternatives
- Dr. Brené Brown's The Daring Way™ shame resilience curriculum
- Ropes course and other adventure therapies
- Art therapy and other creative approaches
- Yoga, acupuncture and massage therapy
- Neurofeedback

If you have questions or need additional information about addiction and recovery, below are links to several resources:



Helpful Links from Elements Behavioral Health:

- ▶ Resources: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/resources/>
- ▶ Addiction Resources: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/addiction-resources/>
- ▶ Our Success Rates: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/long-term-study-shows-positive-treatment-outcomes/>
- ▶ Testimonials & Reviews: <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/about/testimonials/>

Additional Links and Resources:

- ▶ CDC: What can we expect from substance abuse treatment? <http://www.cdc.gov/idu/facts/ExpectationsFin.pdf>
- ▶ NIDA: Seeking Drug Abuse Treatment: Know what to ask: <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/seeking-drug-abuse-treatment>
- ▶ NIDA: Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: <http://www.defense.gov/specials/drugawareness/images/podat.pdf>
- ▶ NIDA: Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment, Family's Role: https://d14rmgtrwzf5a.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/podat_1.pdf
- ▶ NIDA: Treatment and Recovery, Relapse Rates: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugs-brains-behavior-science-addiction/treatment-recovery>
- ▶ NIAAA: What is Addiction? <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/arh312/93-95.htm>
- ▶ SAMHSA: 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf>
- ▶ SAMHSA: Should you talk to someone about a drug, alcohol, or mental health problem? <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Should-You-Talk-to-Someone-About-a-Drug-Alcohol-or-Mental-Health-Problem-/SMA10-4585>
- ▶ Understanding Drug Use and Addiction: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/understanding-drug-use-addiction>
- ▶ Evidence-based Addiction Treatment: <https://blogs.psychcentral.com/addiction-recovery/2012/07/evidence-based-addiction-treatment/>
- ▶ CASA: Addiction Medicine: <https://www.centeronaddiction.org/addiction-research/reports/addiction-medicine-closing-gap-between-science-and-practice>
- ▶ CASA: Family Involvement in Addiction Treatment: <https://www.centeronaddiction.org/addiction-research/reports/family-matters-substance-abuse-and-american-family>
- ▶ Al-anon Membership Survey Results: <https://al-anon.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/MembershipSurvey.pdf>
- ▶ Family Stages of Change During and After Rehab: <http://adaiclearinghouse.org/downloads/TIP-39-Substance-Abuse-Treatment-and-Family-Therapy-55.pdf>

The Elements Behavioral Health® family of programs is committed to providing the highest quality clinical care across our treatment centers. We provide treatment for addiction, dual diagnoses, primary mental health and a variety of other behavioral health issues. At the core of our philosophy is partnering with referring professionals, specialists, family members and other treatment providers to ensure the most comprehensive treatment plans for our clients.



**Be their lifeline to recovery.
Get help today.**

866.946.3930

www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/contact