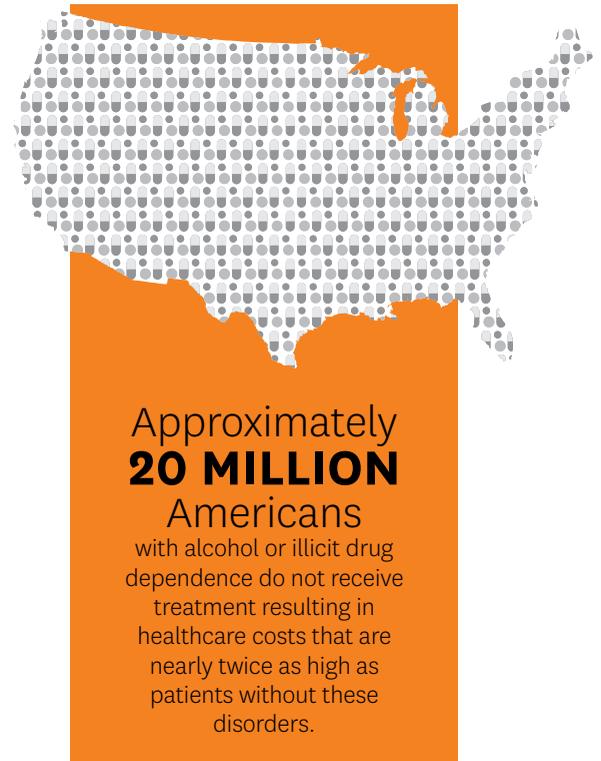


## Primary Care Substance Use Disorder Toolkit

Enclosed is a package of supporting tools proven to be effective in the identification and treatment of Substance Use issues. The goal of Sunshine Health's Behavioral Health toolkit is to support the screening for recognition of, and treatment of behavioral health and substance use disorders at the primary care level. Approximately 20 million Americans with alcohol or illicit drug dependence do not receive treatment resulting in healthcare costs that are nearly twice as high as patients without these disorders. Recent research indicates that basic screening and identification of substance use in primary care settings can substantially reduce overall negative health impacts associated with substance use, as well as increase the access to appropriate treatment services. In the largest study on how primary care physicians address substance use disorders, less than 20% of PCPs described themselves as prepared to identify alcoholism or illegal drug use, (The National Center on Addiction and Substance Use at Columbia University, 2012).



### What are Substance Use Disorders?

Substance Use Disorder encompasses a pattern of behaviors that range from misuse to dependency or addiction, whether it is alcohol, legal drugs or illegal drugs. It is a progressive and chronic disease, but also one that can be successfully treated. People with substance use disorders often don't recognize or seek help for the problem, and may not be screened for substance use when they seek treatment for other health conditions, which means that substance use and dependence disorders are often underrecognized and undertreated.

### Who is Affected by Substance Use Disorders?

Substance Use Disorder can affect anyone regardless of age, occupation, economic circumstances, ethnic background or gender. However, certain factors can affect the likelihood of developing an addiction:

- **Family history of addiction:** Drug addiction is more common in some families and likely involves the effects of many genes. If a blood relative, such as a parent or sibling, has alcohol or drug problems, then a greater risk of developing a drug addiction exists.
- **Being male:** Men are twice as likely to have problems with drugs.
- **Having another psychological diagnosis:** If someone has psychological problem, such as depression, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder, they are more likely to become dependent on drugs.

## Types of Substance Use Disorders

### Substance Dependence

A pattern of substance use that leads to significant impairment or distress in three (or more) of the following ways:

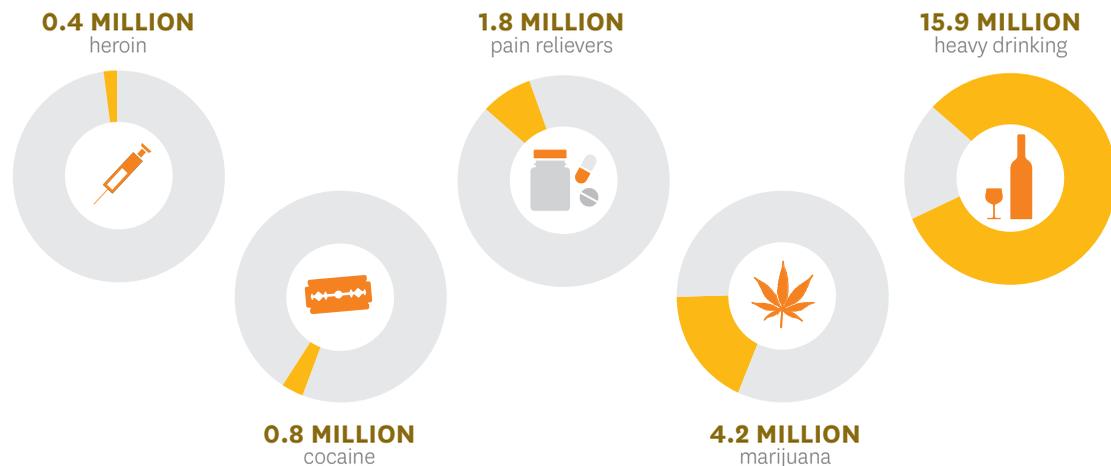
- Tolerance, as defined by either:
  1. a need for markedly increased amounts of the substance to achieve the desired effect, or
  2. a markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of the substance
- Withdrawal symptoms characteristic for the substance, or increased use to relieve or avoid withdrawal symptoms
- Increased use - the substance is taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than intended
- A persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control substance use
- Much time is spent in activities to obtain the substance, use the substance, or recover from its effects
- Important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced
- The substance use is continued despite it causing a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem (e.g., current cocaine use despite recognition of cocaine-induced depression)

### Substance Use

A pattern of substance use that leads to significant impairment or distress in one (or more) of the following ways:

- A failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school or home
- Recurrent substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous
- Recurrent substance-related legal problems
- Continued substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or worsened by the effects of the substance problem (e.g., current cocaine use despite recognition of cocaine-induced depression)

### Number of Americans Identifying use or dependence on Illicit Substances (SAMHSA 2011)



## Screening Tools & Resources

Despite the high prevalence of behavioral health and substance use problems, too many Americans go without treatment — in part because their disorders go undiagnosed. Regular screenings in primary care and other healthcare settings enable earlier identification of behavioral health and substance use disorders, which translates into earlier care. Screenings should be provided to people of all ages, even the young and the elderly.



**SBIRT** is a comprehensive, integrated approach to help medical practitioners identify and provide early intervention to those patients who screen as at-risk for developing an SUD or long-term health issues related to their substance use. SBIRT includes a brief screen (the attached CAGE and AUDIT screening tools are examples) followed by a brief intervention, if appropriate, or referral for assessment and treatment. Please refer to your individual provider contract for information about whether SBIRT services are a covered benefit in your state. Additional training related to SBIRT, Substance Use Targeted Screening in Primary Care, and Brief Intervention Skills are available through [www.sunshinehealth.com](http://www.sunshinehealth.com) or calling your local office.



**CAGE AID** is a commonly used, five-question tool used to screen for drug and alcohol use. It is a quick questionnaire to help determine if an alcohol assessment is needed. If a person answers yes to two or more questions, a complete assessment is advised.



**AUDIT** is a 10-item questionnaire that screens for hazardous or harmful alcohol consumption. The AUDIT is particularly suitable for use in primary care settings and has been used with a variety of populations and cultural groups. It should be administered by a health professional or paraprofessional.



**There is extensive research on the medical consequences and overall cost of substance use related illness and services. Substance Use can:**

- **Lead to unintentional injuries and violence.**
- **Exacerbate medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, hypertension).**
- **Exacerbate behavioral health conditions (e.g. depression, bi-polar).**
- **Affect the efficacy of prescribed meds.**
- **Result in dependence, which may require multiple treatment services.**

### Best Practices

Treatment must address the individual needs of the person seeking treatment and recovery. The current research-based best practices tend to merge the bio-psychosocial, theoretical perspective of addictive disorders. This includes supportive counseling, motivating client readiness for change, and coping-skills training techniques.

For additional information about substance use disorders or other behavioral health screening tools go to any of the following websites:

[nami.org](http://nami.org)  
[sunshinehealth.com](http://sunshinehealth.com)  
[nimh.nih.gov](http://nimh.nih.gov)  
[mentalhealth.samsha.gov](http://mentalhealth.samsha.gov)  
[iccmhc.org](http://iccmhc.org)

Have Questions?  
Call us at  
1-866-796-0530