

6 Categories of Addictive Drugs

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Drug classifications are used by doctors, law enforcement, and other professional groups to help identify the effects of the various addictive drug types on the human body. Some drugs speed up the body's functions while others slow them down. Mixing some types of drugs from various categories is not uncommon and can be fatal. The body systems for processing such chemicals can be overloaded, causing severe side effects.

6 Drug Categories

Addictive drugs come in various legal and illegal types, and many can be consumed in various ways. Abusing drugs can lead to addiction, known to drug treatment specialists as substance use disorder (SUD). Drug addiction can cause many difficulties for people leading to tragic outcomes, including job loss, financial hardship, loss of meaningful relationships, and even death. These and other problems due to SUD motivate many people to seek drug rehab for recovery from addiction to substances in one of the groups on this drug categories list:

Opioids & Morphine Derivatives

Opioids are one of the most abused drug categories in the United States. Opioid drugs can relieve pain and cause feelings of euphoria. Side-effects can include nausea, confusion, drowsiness, and respiratory problems, among others. Drugs in this category include:

- Opium
- Heroin
- Codeine
- Hydrocodone

- Morphine
- Oxycodone
- Fentanyl

Cannabinoids

Cannabinoids include groups of compounds that include cannabinal and active elements of cannabis. The drugs cause feelings of euphoria. They also cause anxiety, confusion, memory issues, increased heart rate, impaired balance, and slowed reaction time. Kinds of drugs in this category include:

- Marijuana
- Hashish
- Cannabinal

Depressants

Depressant drugs slow the functioning of the central nervous system. The drugs are popularly called “downers” due to their effects of slowing body functions and causing a relaxed sensation. Depressants are frequently prescribed to relieve stress. Drowsiness is a common side-effect. Stopping the use of a depressant drug can be very difficult without professional intervention. Drugs in this category include:

- Alcohol
- Barbiturates
- Benzodiazepines
- GHB
- Tranquilizers

Stimulants

Stimulants cause functioning in the nervous system to accelerate and cause a sensation of increased energy. The street name for this general class of drugs is “uppers” due to the starkly awake sensation users experience on the drugs. Many ultimately enter drug addiction treatment programs to avoid severe side effects and the highly negative impact the drugs have on the lives of people who become addicted. Drugs in this category include:

- Cocaine
- Methamphetamines
- Amphetamines
- Ritalin

Hallucinogens

Drugs of this type alter the consciousness and cause things that don't really exist to appear and seem natural to the person using the drug. Hallucinogens impact body movement, speech, and physical self-control, sometimes also causing feelings of paranoia or hostility. Other dangerous side-effects of hallucinogens can include raised heart rate and blood pressure, heart failure, and hormonal changes. Drugs in this category include:

- LSD
- Mescaline
- Psilocybin (mushrooms)

Inhalants

Inhalants are frequently abused chemical substances that produce an instant high sensation when inhaled. Inhalants cause oxygen deprivation, leading to accelerated heart rate. Some other serious side-effects can include lung, kidney, and liver problems and brain damage. Some drugs in this category include:

- Laughing gas
- Aerosol sprays
- Paint thinner
- Glues
- Gasoline

What About Prescription Drugs?

Drugs are prescribed by doctors to treat pain, anxiety, depression, and other physical and mental conditions. When the drugs prescribed are used as directed and discontinued as appropriate, they can help people work through issues and positively affect their lives. But, as with their illegal counterparts that produce the same or similar types of effects, users can experience serious health effects, including addiction and other consequences of abusing prescription drugs. Some drug types in this generalized category include these types of recognizable brand names:

- Opioids like Codeine, Morphine, and Oxycodone
- Stimulants like Adderall and Dexedrine
- Depressants, like barbiturates, benzodiazepines, and brands like Valium and Xanax

Why Choose Renaissance Recovery Center?

At Renaissance Recovery Center in Gilbert, Arizona, we help people recover from addiction to drugs of any type we've discussed above. Our treatment staff includes medical doctors, addiction recovery specialists, and other rehab experts. We work closely with each client to uncover the root causes of addiction to alcohol or drugs in the categories discussed above.

For information about rehab programs, call Renaissance Recovery Center at (480) 526-7738, or contact us online to schedule an appointment for a free assessment!
