

Most common co-occurring disorders with substance abuse

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Have you ever come across a chronic alcoholic? If you have, you might already know that people who are used to substance abuse usually suffer from some degree of psychiatric disorder. This combination is sometimes referred to as co-occurring disorder or dual disorders. ***The psychiatric component is extremely crucial***, as people with mental disorders are more likely to indulge themselves in substance abuse. It is just like a vicious cycle.

Alcohol and mental health disorders

A chronic alcoholic individual usually suffers from several mental disorders including diseases such as mania, major depression, personality disorder, or even schizophrenia. Sign symptoms might vary depending on conditions. For example, people suffering from mania might exhibit periods of high excitement or euphoria, often interspersed with periods of depression. ***Because alcohol is so closely associated with having a good time, both extremes may drive the individual to drink, whether to celebrate or to console oneself.***

On the other hand, a depressive individual might struggle to cope up with outside world and usually has generalized disinterest in everything. Consequently, alcohol may seem like the only way to relax or socialize; drinking might also be the only way to fight back against the utter lack of feeling depression can cause. Adding to the damage, a depressive individual might have suicidal tendencies that seem inescapable without a little “liquid courage” to help.

Finally, an alcoholic can be a very anti-social person normally, so social drinking might be the only way to fake being a more out-going person. Alternately, the company of other people might be boring and irritating no matter what, so the sufferer might hole up at home, completely unaware of how much they’re drinking.

Schizophrenia is a more severe disorder, characterized by auditory hallucinations, broadcasting of thoughts, uncontrolled feelings and delusions. Compared to other disorders, ***schizophrenia is a longer lasting one and more difficult to treat, which may lead someone to self-medicate through alcoholism and other addictions.***

As you can guess, all of the above-mentioned disorders are directly affected by either chronic alcoholism or sudden withdrawal. Hence, treating only the addiction or only the mental disorder is a recipe for relapsing.

Mental health disorders and other addictions

While the relationship between chronic alcoholism and depression is a well-established one, more relationships between psychiatric disorders and other forms of substance abuse are being discovered all the time. Consider the following examples.

Heroin and Depression

Preliminary research findings suggest that people taking heroin are more likely to suffer from depression resulting from mental stress, social isolation and guilt complex.

Cocaine and Anxiety

On the other hand, cocaine addicts are more likely to be anxious. Once the urge for cocaine sets into their brain, they show symptoms reminiscent of classically generalized anxiety disorder such as excessive worry, sweating, fear that is out of proportion to the situation, and unrealistic world views.

Integrated treatment for co-occurring disorders in Arizona

For people struggling with addictions along with co-occurring disorders, integrated treatment is a must . Many symptoms associated with chronic substance abuse are correlated with preexisting mental disorders. Hence, careful research of a patient's circumstances is vital to providing successful treatment. If we can understand the inner mechanisms driving the addictive behavior, treatment becomes much easier.

As stated previously, co-occurring disorders with substance abuse is a vicious cycle. That's why you need expert assistance, someone who can help you or your family members going through such tumultuous conditions.

If you or a loved one are struggling with repeated bouts of addiction, call Renaissance Recovery today!