Center for Community Engagement at Chestnut Health Systems

THE BRAIN & THE DISEASE OF ADDICTION: THE BASICS

Here's What You Need to Know About the Brain & the Disease of Addiction

THE BASICS

Below you will find a series of links that offer more information on the disease of addiction. Click on each link to learn more about why addiction is a disease and not a choice or a moral failing.

The Addiction Policy Forum **has put together a series of videos about addiction. This first one, "The Hijacker," reinforces the idea that substances can hijack a person's brain and explains the role that dopamine plays in this process.**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbOAKmzKmJo
Another video from the Addiction Policy Forum discusses the risk factors that can lead to the development of a substance use disorder for some, but not for others.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Epc5JLKPMmw
Harvard Online **explains how opioid addiction develops by looking closely at the mechanics of neurons and dopamine and how the natural release of endorphins can be replaced by substances during addiction.**
https://www.edx.org/learn/drugs/harvard-university-the-opioid-crisis-in-america
This video from *How Addiction Happens* offers an explanation of some of the risk factors that can lead to the development of the disease of addiction. It includes a message to parents and students about how and when to get help.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDfSx_Q7_Yk
The National Institute on Drug Abuse has put together this booklet called, "Drugs, Brains, and Behavior: The Science of Addiction." It discusses how the brain works and how it is affected by substance use. It also reviews risk factors and the importance of prevention.
https://nida.nih.gov/sites/default/files/soa_2014.pdf
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) **put together a report called "Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health."**
https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt39443/2021NSDUHFFRRev010323.pdf
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) **has a self-assessment that you can take to help you determine if you have an addiction.**

https://www.aa.org/self-assessment

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