

Signs that someone you know may be using drugs

Physical Signs

- Loss of appetite, increase in appetite, any changes in eating habits
- unexplained weight loss or gain.
- Slowed or staggering walk and poor physical coordination.
- Inability to sleep, awake at unusual times, unusual laziness.
- Red, watery eyes, pupils larger or smaller than usual; blank stare.
- Cold, sweaty palms, shaking hands.
- Puffy face, blushing or paleness.
- Smell of substance on breath, body or clothes.
- Extreme hyperactivity, excessive talkativeness.
- Runny nose, hacking cough.
- Needle marks on arm, leg or hand.
- Nausea, vomiting or excessive sweating.
- Tremors or shakes of hands, feet or head.
- Irregular heartbeat.

Behavioral Signs

- Change in overall attitude/personality with no other identifiable cause.
- Changes in friends, new hangouts, sudden avoidance of old crowd
- Doesn't want to talk about new friends, friends are known drug users.
- Change in activities or hobbies.
- Drop in grades at school or performance at work, skips school or is late for school.
- Change in habits at home, loss of interest in family and family activities.
- Difficulty in paying attention, forgetfulness.
- General lack of motivation, energy, self-esteem, "I don't care" attitude.
- Sudden oversensitivity, temper tantrums, or resentful behavior.
- Moodiness, irritability, or nervousness.
- Silliness or giddiness.
- Paranoia
- Excessive need for privacy, or is unreachable.
- Secretive or suspicious behavior.
- Car accidents.
- Chronic dishonesty.
- Unexplained need for money, stealing money or items.
- Change in personal grooming habits.
- Possession of drug paraphernalia.

Drug Specific Signs

Marijuana: Glassy, red eyes, loud talking and inappropriate laughter followed by sleepiness, a sweet burnt or skunky scent, loss of interest, motivation, weight gain or loss, lethargic and unmotivated

Alcohol: Clumsiness, difficulty walking, slurred speech, sleepiness, poor judgment, dilated pupils, possession of a false ID card.

Depressants: (including barbiturates and tranquilizers and Tylenol 3s') Seems drunk as if from alcohol but without the associated odor of alcohol, difficulty concentrating, clumsiness, poor judgment, slurred speech; sleepiness, and contracted or pinpoint pupils.

Stimulants: Hyperactivity, euphoria, irritability, anxiety, excessive talking followed by depression or excessive sleeping at odd times, may go long periods of time without eating or sleeping, dilated pupils, weight loss, dry mouth and nose.

Inhalants: (Glues, gasoline, aerosols, and vapors) Watery eyes, impaired vision, memory and thought problems, secretions from the nose or rashes around the nose and mouth, headaches and nausea, appearance of intoxication, drowsiness, poor muscle control, changes in appetite, anxiety, irritability, an unusual number of spray cans in the trash.

Hallucinogens: Dilated pupils, bizarre and irrational behavior including paranoia, aggression, hallucinations, mood swings, detachment from people, absorption with self or other objects, slurred speech, confusion.

Heroin: Needle marks, tin foil burnt on one side and residue on the other indicates smoking heroin, sleeping at unusual times, sweating, vomiting, coughing and sniffing, twitching, loss of appetite, contracted pupils, no response of pupils to light, nodding off, constantly scratching at face, hoarse and deeper voice.

Tobacco/Nicotine: Smell of tobacco, stained fingers or teeth.

Signs your teen may be involved with alcohol or drugs

If six of these signs, (not all in the same category), are present for a period of time, you should talk to your teen and seek some professional help.

Signs in the Home

- Loss of interest in family activities
- Disrespect for family rules
- Withdrawal from responsibilities
- Verbally or physically abusive
- Sudden increase or decrease in appetite
- Disappearance of valuable items or money
- Not coming home on time
- Not telling you where they are going
- Constant excuses for behavior
- Spending a lot of time in their rooms
- Lies about activities
- Finding the following: cigarette rolling papers, pipes, roach clips, small glass vials, plastic baggies, remnants of drugs (seeds, etc.)

Signs at School

- Sudden drop in grades
- Truancy
- Loss of interest in learning
- Sleeping in class
- Poor work performance
- Not doing homework
- Defiant of authority
- Poor attitude towards sports or other extracurricular activities
- Reduced memory and attention span
- Not informing you of teacher meetings, open houses, etc.

Physical and Emotional Signs

- Changes friends
- Smell of alcohol or marijuana on breath or body
- Unexplainable mood swings and behavior
- Negative, argumentative, paranoid or confused, destructive, anxious
- Over-reacts to criticism, acts rebellious
- Sharing few if any of their personal problems
- Doesn't seem as happy as they used to be
- Overly tired or hyperactive

- Drastic weight loss or gain
- Unhappy and depressed
- Cheats, steals
- Always needs money, or has excessive amounts of money
- Sloppiness in appearance