

## Alcohol Use, Alcohol Abuse, Alcohol Dependence (Alcoholism)

### *The Progression of the Disease*

For most people, having a drink (**alcohol use**) does not lead to problems in relationships, work, or legal arena.

**Alcohol abuse** means having unhealthy or dangerous drinking habits, such as drinking every day or drinking too much at a time. Alcohol abuse can harm your relationships, cause you to miss work, and lead to legal problems such as driving while drunk (intoxicated). When you abuse alcohol, you continue to drink even though you know your drinking is causing problems.

If you continue to abuse alcohol, it can lead to **alcohol dependence**. Alcohol dependence is also called **alcoholism**. You are physically or mentally addicted to alcohol. You have a strong need, or craving, to drink. You feel like you must drink just to get by. Other signs of alcohol dependence include :

- inability to quit drinking or control how much you drink.
- need to drink more to get the same effect.
- experiencing **withdrawal symptoms** when you stop drinking (*sweating, shakiness, nausea-*
- spending a lot of time drinking and recovering from drinking,
- continue to drink even though you develop physical problems.

Alcoholism is a long-term (chronic) disease. It's not a weakness or a lack of willpower. It has a course that can be predicted, has known symptoms, and is influenced by your genes and your life situation, like many other diseases.

## Local Resources

Department of Community Programs  
459 E. First Street, Fond du Lac, WI  
920-929-3500

Agnesian Behavioral Health Services  
435 E. Division Street, Fond du Lac, WI  
920-926-4200

Alcohol Drug Abuse Resource Center  
131 S. Main Street, Fond du Lac, WI  
920-924-5222

Associated Counseling  
551 W. Johnson St., Fond du Lac, WI  
920-907-0097

Aurora Behavioral Health Services  
2640 N 6th St, Sheboygan, WI  
800-752-2673

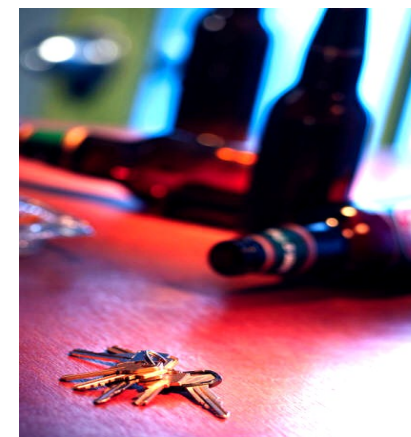
WinnebagoLand AA  
280 N. Main Street, Fond du Lac, WI  
920-922-7512

## Local and National Websites

Alcohol Anonymous	<a href="http://www.aa.org">www.aa.org</a>
Adult Children of Alcoholics	<a href="http://www.adultchildren.org">www.adultchildren.org</a>
Al-anon and Ala-teen	<a href="http://www.alanon.alateen.org">www.alanon.alateen.org</a>
Drug Free Communities	<a href="http://www.drugfreefdl.com">www.drugfreefdl.com</a>
Comprehensive Services Integration	<a href="http://www.csifdl.org">www.csifdl.org</a>
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations	<a href="http://www.samhsa.gov">www.samhsa.gov</a>
Holy Family Parish	<a href="http://www.hffdl.org">www.hffdl.org</a>

# Holy Family Addiction Ministry

## Guide to Understanding Addiction and Getting Help for All



# Addiction as a Chronic Disease...

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines chronic disease as “disease of long duration and generally slow progression.” Such chronic diseases include diabetes, arthritis, asthma, heart disease, high blood pressure.

However, one that we often do not talk about is alcoholism. Although alcoholism is a diagnosable disease similar to other chronic conditions, **many people continue to regard it as a social problem rather than a health issue which causes social problems.** As a result, too few people get the treatment they need, which in turn increases alcohol-related health care costs, disrupts families, cuts productivity in the workplace and threatens the safety of our communities.

Nearly 14 million Americans have serious problems because of their drinking including eight million men and women who suffer from alcoholism. Stigma, the social disapproval that confronts people with addiction to any drug, discourages people who are dependent on alcohol from seeking medical attention and prevents the nation from accepting that alcoholism is a chronic, relapsing

condition with many similarities to asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure

The causes of chronic disease can be complex and include hereditary factors. A person may not experience many symptoms until the disease has advanced. A chronic disease doesn't always follow a predictable course. Some people may relapse more frequently than others.

Information provided by:

***George Washington University Medical Center***



## Addiction and Families

All it takes is one addicted person in a household to turn it into a house of cards; very fragile and unstable. Families do not need to work through this alone. Reaching out to professionals in the addiction field is one step for all family members. Learning each person's role and responsibility in families with addictions helps families to understand how they, at times, unintentionally enable the addiction to continue. Professionals will assist families to learn about addiction and implement ways to manage their lives with care and dignity

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### National Association of Children of Alcoholics

Alcoholism and other drug addiction have genetic and environmental causes. Both have serious consequences for children who live in homes where parents are involved. More than 28 million Americans are children of alcoholics; nearly 11 million are under the age of 18. There are countless number of others who are affected by parents who are impaired by other psychoactive drugs.