

# Overcoming Addiction

## Alcohol Dependency & Detox



### ALCOHOL DEPENDENCY

*Alcohol is the drug of choice for most Americans.*

Besides being legal, alcohol is relatively inexpensive and considered by most to be socially acceptable. Alcohol has been “sold” to us for thousands of years as a feature of good living. Our society celebrates special moments with champagne and drowns sorrows with drink. From childhood we learn to hide or lie about liquor when we drink too much, or are underage. But apart from feeble resistance from a few religious groups, and a state’s legal restrictions, there is no barrier. Americans consume over \$212 billion worth of alcohol per year.

If alcohol use is so widely accepted then what’s wrong with drinking? **For most people alcohol isn’t a dangerous drug. But for the person with the chronic brain disease called Addiction, alcohol is pure poison and can be life-threatening.**

Although the medical community acknowledges certain health benefits of moderate alcohol use (1 drink for women and 2 for men), they post a clear **WARNING: More than three drinks a day for women, or four for men, puts you at high risk of irreparable brain damage.**

### An Alcohol Damaged Brain

**Chronic alcohol abuse severely compromises your mental ability.** In the short-term it can cause you to drink and drive. And, in the long-term it can **irreversibly** affect memory formation, abstract thinking, problem solving, attention, concentration, and emotions.

Alcoholics who abstain from drinking can recover from some alcohol-induced brain damage. But no one knows how much alcohol it takes to cause irreversible brain damage? Drinking can be like playing Russian roulette.

### Alcohol passes the blood brain barrier

Alcohol immediately passes through the blood brain barrier which is why people often say, “The drink went straight to my head”.

Alcohol’s rapid absorption, in high concentrations (i.e., multiple drinks ingested quickly), can suppress the centers in the brain that control breathing causing you to pass out or even die.

Additionally, alcohol causes the release of a neurotransmitter in the brain called dopamine. Dopamine, labeled by neuroscientists, as the “addiction molecule” is responsible for the rewarding effect that keeps you drinking. For many this reward can be limited to a single cocktail but for an alcoholic this “pleasurable moment” can quickly turn into a life-threatening physical disease.

HOW MUCH CAN ONE DRINK depends on many factors - the rate of consumption, the quantity, how much fat and muscle mass you have, and whether or not you eat while drinking.

The kind of alcohol we drink is called ethanol. Once ethanol hits your bloodstream it travels to every organ in the body, which is why heavy drinking is so physically, mentally, and spiritually debilitating.

HOW YOU DRINK ALCOHOL ALSO AFFECTS YOUR RISK. “Binge drinking” is particularly dangerous. When young people drink too much, too fast, they risk passing out and dying. Never leave someone who has passed out from alcohol alone. Too much alcohol suppresses normal breathing and is extremely dangerous. If in question, call 911.

### Combining alcohol with drugs is a huge NO-NO!

**All sedatives can become deadly when combined with alcohol.**

**Mixing alcohol with narcotics can result in overdose.**

**Alcohol should not be mixed with any drug that makes you sleepy** – opiates (heroin, oxycodone, morphine), Valium-like drugs (benzodiazepines, sleep medications (Ambien) and antihistamines found in cold medications.

**Mixing alcohol with antibiotics can cause convulsions** (seizures), nausea, and vomiting.

**Mixing alcohol with antihistamines can enhance sedation** and excessive dizziness **which is particularly dangerous for older adults.**

**Mixing alcohol with Tylenol (acetaminophen) creates a chemical that causes liver damage.**

And, the list goes on.

# Alcohol dependence vs Alcohol abuse

In general, **alcohol abuse** refers to patterns of drinking that cause health problems or social problems, or both.

**Alcohol dependence**, more commonly known as **alcoholism**, refers to the brain disease we know as Addiction.

Addiction leads to lack of control over drinking and life. Signs of physical dependence (withdrawal) appear within hours of stopping to drink and may manifest as anxiety, hallucinations, seizures and tremors.

**Alcohol dependence (alcoholism) is characterized by cravings. A person who suddenly stops, without the proper medical care, can experience severe and sometimes deadly withdrawal symptoms. If you are an alcoholic do not try detox on your own. Seek medical help immediately! Call Luna Living 440-703-0940.**

## Don't drink if you are pregnant

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) is the full range of neurological, cognitive, behavioral, and learning disabilities associated with prenatal alcohol exposure. **Alcohol passes the blood brain barrier and immediately, and negatively, affects an unborn fetus. There is absolutely no safe level of drinking during pregnancy.** Children born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) suffer learning impairments for life.

## Addiction

Addiction is a primary, chronic brain disease that affects brain reward, motivation, memory, and related circuitry. Without treatment and engagement in recovery activities, it often results in disability or premature death.

HOW DO I KNOW I AM ADDICTED? Addiction is characterized by your inability to consistently abstain; cravings; a dysfunctional emotional response and a diminished recognition of significant problems with your behavior and interpersonal relationships. Like other chronic diseases, Addiction can involve cycles of relapse and remission and premature death if left untreated.

A widely used screening test is **CAGE**. If you have two or more positive responses it is likely you have a problem with alcohol.

- Have you ever felt the need to **Cut** down on your drinking?
- Have you ever felt **Annoyed** by someone criticizing your drinking?
- Have you ever felt **Guilty** about your drinking?
- Have you ever felt the need for an **Eye-opener?** (a drink at the beginning of the day)?

**NO ONE IN MY FAMILY IS AN ALCOHOLIC. AM I AT RISK?** Overexposure to alcohol can lead to alcohol dependence. **Alcohol changes the brain of everyone!** Anyone that chronically abuses alcohol will eventually become dependent. If you drink to self-medicate for co-existing conditions it is likely you will become addicted, if you aren't already.

## ALCOHOL WITHDRAWAL

Alcohol sedates your brain. Your brain works 24/7 to protect you, To do its job the brain offsets the sedative effects of alcohol consumption by producing larger and larger quantities of norepinephrine, a chemical similar to adrenaline. Although you abruptly stop drinking, your brain needs time to respond. It may take a few days to rebalance your brain chemistry which is why the excess norepinephrine in your bloodstream causes withdrawal symptoms.

Only about 5% of alcoholics experience a dangerous withdrawal, known as delirium tremens, or DTs. Because your brain is unable to adjust to the quickly changing chemistry, you can experience confusion, hallucinations, and you are at increased risk of a heart attack or stroke. There is no way of knowing in advance if you are one of the 5%, which is why you should seek medical care to detox your body.

## A Safe Transition to Sobriety

Luna Living is CARF-accredited, treatment facility for substance use disorders and intensive outpatient mental health care, located in Bainbridge, Ohio. We are staffed by licensed integrative medical professionals ready to address your physical and mental health needs in a compassionate setting. All our recovery therapies can be used in combination with 12-Step Meetings, Addiction Counselors, Psychotherapists, Family Therapists, Spiritual Programs, Integrative Physicians, Nutritionists, and Executive Coaches.

## ALCOHOL DETOX

**Don't try to detox alone! When you stop drinking you cannot know how your body will react. It's important to consult a medical professional licensed for substance use disorders and mental health care, to help you detox safely.**

Toughing it out may not be safe. Chronic alcohol abuse compromises your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. Detoxing alone could unknowingly put yourself at a higher risk of relapse and mortal danger.

Most alcoholics experience mild to severe withdrawal symptoms - feeling sick and suffering with physical and psychological cravings brought on by dependence. Withdrawal symptoms vary from person-to-person. They will be specific to the combination of drugs abused and the severity of your dependency.

# After detox you must begin addiction treatment immediately.

When you detox make sure you have a recovery plan that discourages drinking. Having a personal support system is important. If you don't have family or friends you can call on then find a licensed substance use disorder and mental care provider to help you. Call Luna Living 440-703-0940.

All too often alcoholics relapse by self-medicating pain and don't realize that after detox their tolerance is much lower putting them at risk of overdosing.

WHY DO TRADITIONAL DETOX AND INPATIENT PROGRAMS HAVE SUCH A HIGH RATE OF RELAPSE? Although residential treatment centers can be effective in the short-term, there is debate whether a residential treatment has any better long-term result on abstinence from alcohol abuse than outpatient programs.

In a federally funded four year study<sup>1</sup> of 922 alcoholics, researchers found:

- 28 percent refrained from drinking for six months after treatment.
- 21 percent remained abstinent after one year.
- 7 percent remained abstinent after four years.

<sup>1</sup>SEVEN WEEKS TO SOBRIETY, Joan Matthews Larson, Ph.D., pg. 20

Unfortunately, chronic diseases are subject to reoccurrence, including Addiction. You must treat Addiction from the inside out with a daily regime of high quality nutrition, healthy supplementation, cognitive behavioral therapy, and lifestyle changes that support a healthy brain.

## Alcoholics looking for a simple solution will not find it.

Addiction cannot be cured by taking a pill or cutting back consumption. Alcoholism is a chronic brain disease that requires you to abstain from drinking alcohol and "do the inner work" necessary to live in remission.

## GETTING STARTED ON YOUR RECOVERY

Your treatment and level of care should be determined by your medical diagnosis. Call us for an assessment of your condition and to discuss finding the right solution for you.

Your decision to start over is a life changing accomplishment. Let us make it easier. Call today! 440-703-0940. We are open 7 days a week. Same day appointments are available.

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## Quantum Brain Cleanse™ Detox, A 10-Day IV NAD+ therapy

The fear and horror associated with substance and alcohol withdrawal is reason enough for most addicts to avoid "getting clean". Our medical detox program begins with treating the debilitated state of your brain and body with targeted nutrition and adequate fluids. Luna Living's Alcohol Detox protocol takes a fraction of the time needed for "tapered" or Librium-assisted detox methods. In only 10 days you will be sober and working with our staff and your family on building a new and exciting lifestyle.

Quantum Brain Cleanse™ is a pivotal difference between Luna Living's outpatient detox program and traditional rehab detox programs. This is a medically-supervised, nutritionally-aided detox therapy, delivered via an IV drip, under the care of a doctor. Intravenous delivery is used to avoid most unwanted side-effects, such as nausea and stomach cramping often associated with taking high doses of supplements by mouth. Bypassing the digestive system, the body can receive immediate benefit and more readily assimilate higher doses of nutrients.

The 10-day detox protocol, Quantum Brain Cleanse, assists your detoxification and rejuvenation process by nourishing your body, fueling its natural ability to heal. The medically-supervised, nutritionally-aided detoxification support, in the form of nutrition and adequate fluids, improves the elimination of toxins and encourages the healing of the organs directly involved in detoxification: the brain, liver, kidneys, and intestinal tract.

After detox you are ready to begin your remission lifestyle. [This detox protocol is not a replacement for cognitive therapy and behavioral change.](#) During the 10-day protocol you will begin cognitive treatments and lifestyle supportive care. If you are currently working with a therapist or medical professional, we can include them in your treatment plan.

Participating in our program should create minimal disruption to your day-to-day routine. Taking two week's vacation allows most to maintain employment.

Quantum Brain Cleanse can assist you to detox from the following addictions.

Alcohol	Amphetamines	Antidepressants
Barbiturates	Benzodiazepines	Cocaine
Crystal Methamphetamine	Heroin	Marijuana
Methadone	Nicotine	Opioids
Prescription Painkillers	Stimulants	Suboxone

***Disclaimer: The detoxification experience as outlined on this website is meant to be an example, but results, withdrawal symptoms, and experience will vary by patient, severity of addiction and other factors.***

What is NAD?

Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide (NAD) is a coenzyme made from niacin, vitamin B3. It is found in all living cells and is required by the body to repair and rejuvenate cellular activities. In the body, NAD upregulates energy production, by increasing the levels of neurotransmitters like serotonin, GABA and dopamine.

A body in optimal health produces a sufficient supply of NAD from nutritional foods; however, chronic drug and alcohol abuse deplete the body's reserves. At the moment of detox, you cannot eat enough food, fast enough, and rich enough in amino acids, vitamins and minerals to overcome the damage addiction caused. An IV drip makes it possible to infuse your bloodstream with nutritionally enriched fluids that help you sidestep withdrawal symptoms and regain mental clarity.

## Our Philosophy On Starting Over

Alcoholism seriously abuses all facets of normal brain function. It physically destroys your health and leaves you emotionally debilitated. Until your body is physically rejuvenated you cannot access the internal resources needed to overcome cravings and change your addictive behaviors.

At Luna Living you will never declare your life unmanageable or admit you are powerless. In fact, we insist you think powerfully, believe in yourself, and act hopeful, courageous, and motivated.

After many years of experience helping people, just like you, we know these qualities are what it takes to live in remission. Rest assured, in moments of strength and weakness, our medical staff will do everything to help you recover your healthy identity.

Luna Living can help you get answers you need!

**440-703-0940**

info@lunaliving.org

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***Disclaimer: The research papers listed do not necessarily reference or specifically contemplate the specific NAD+ infusion therapy provided by Luna Living; but instead, discuss the benefits of NAD treatment and research more generally.***