

NATIONAL ADDICTIONS AWARENESS WEEK 2022



#CommunityCaring

#NAAW2022

NATIONAL ADDICTIONS AWARENESS WEEK

November 20 - 26, 2022

National Addictions Awareness Week (NAAW) is being recognized nationally November 20-26, 2022. NAAW started in 1980 as a week to promote public awareness and involvement on issues related to all addictions. NAAW encourages awareness of substance use and problematic gambling, and gives us an opportunity to highlight how all Albertans can play a role in supporting one another in living addiction-free by driving change together. This newsletter will focus on information about *drug-induced psychosis*.

Drug-Induced Psychosis

Drug-induced psychosis is a real concern. Psychosis is often described as a “loss of reality” or a “break from reality” because it makes you experience or believe things that aren’t real. It can change the way you think, act, feel or sense. What makes someone vulnerable to drug-induced psychosis is not fully understood yet, but there is a portion of the population that has a stronger predisposition to psychosis.

Risk factors may include:

- A family history of psychosis
- A past psychotic episode
- Teenagers are more at risk than adults
- The earlier someone starts using a substance, and the more they use, the higher their risk of developing psychosis later in life
- Genetics
- Frequent substance use (daily or near daily)
- Using high-potency substances

People living with psychosis who continue to use increase their risk of relapse and hospitalizations. Ongoing substance use makes the symptoms of psychosis less responsive to treatment and increases the risk of the symptoms recurring.

PEACE RIVER ADDICTION SERVICES

Office hours are
Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Addiction & Mental
Health Building
10015 – 98 St,
Peace River, AB
T8S 1T4

Available to all
Albertans: adults, youth,
family, and friends

National Addictions
Awareness Week is
Nov 20 – 26, 2022

For more information or
to schedule an
appointment with an
Addictions Counsellor call
780-624-6151

Outpatient services are
voluntary, confidential,
and free of charge.

24 Hour Help Line
1-866-332-2322

What Drugs Cause Psychosis?

Many substances can induce psychosis. Methamphetamine and hallucinogenic drugs (such as LSD, psilocybin mushrooms) are most commonly associated with psychosis. Other drugs including cocaine, ecstasy, PCP, Ketamine, alcohol and cannabis can bring on a psychotic episode.

Factors that may bring on a psychotic episode include:

Taking too much of a substance

Having an adverse reaction to a drug

Mixing different drugs

Having an underlying mental illness

Withdrawal

During a Drug-Induced Psychosis an individual may experience one or more of the following symptoms:

- **Hallucinations** - hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling or feeling something that is not actually there
- **Delusions** - false beliefs that are firmly held and are out of keeping with the person's culture
- **Paranoia** – a feeling that you are being threatened in some way, such as people watching you or acting against you, even though there's no proof that it's true
- **Disorganized speech, thoughts or behavior** - switching rapidly between subjects in speaking, finding it hard to concentrate or follow a conversation, being unable to complete everyday tasks
- **Mood Changes**
- **Personality changes**
- **Suicidal thoughts**

Getting Help

Not every person who uses drugs will experience psychosis. For some people who do, it can become a life-altering condition. If you are with someone who is having serious delusions and may be in danger, seek medical attention immediately. In drug-induced psychosis, once the effects of the drugs wear off, the symptoms of psychosis can spontaneously resolve or may require ongoing treatment. Psychosis may be a real consequence of using drugs.

Early intervention is important. The first five years after the onset of psychosis is a critical period in which the symptoms are most treatable. The best way to protect your health is avoid using substances completely. Psychosis treatment may include: care in a hospital, medication that reduce hallucinations and delusions and stabilize thinking and behavior, and group or individual therapy.

If you are at risk for mental health concerns (especially if you have psychosis or a mental health disorder with psychotic symptoms such as schizophrenia, depression, or bipolar disorder) it is recommended that you avoid using substances altogether. For some people with schizophrenia or psychosis who use substances, stopping or using less will help them think more clearly and have an easier time working and living.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with substance use or problem gambling please know help is available. You can get more information by calling the **Peace River Addiction and Mental Health office at 780-624-6151** to speak to an Addictions Counsellor or to schedule a walk-in Addictions appointment. Outside of office hours, please call the **Addiction Helpline at 1-866-332-2322**.