

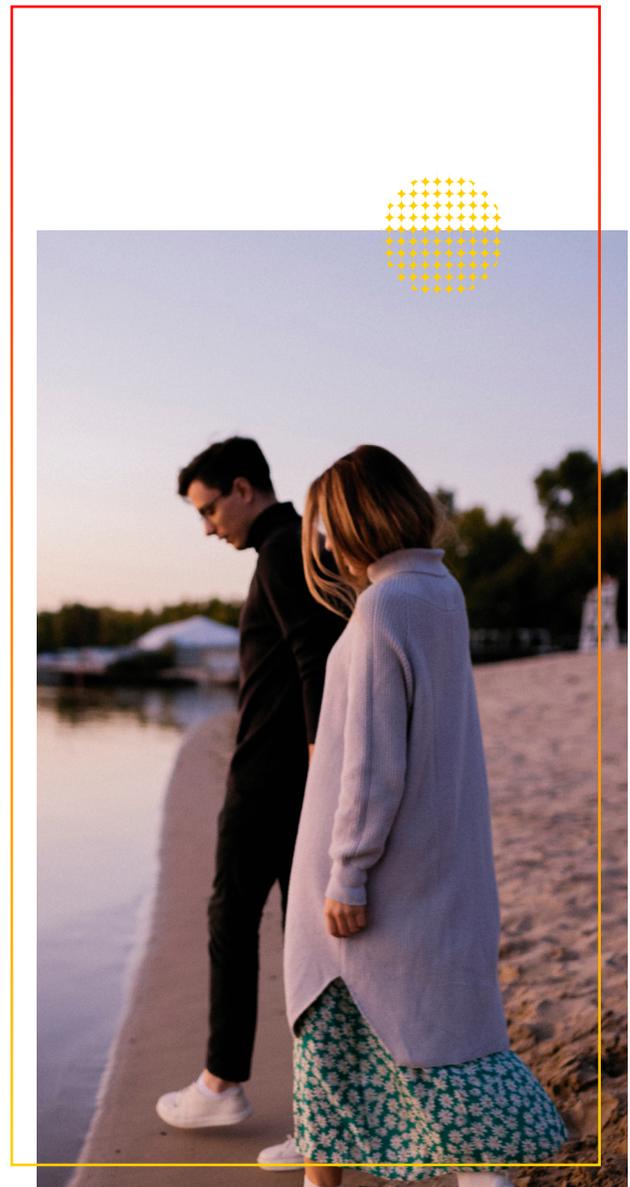
Secret Signs of Addiction:

7 RED FLAGS YOU SHOULDN'T IGNORE

Watching a loved one struggle with addiction is exhausting and overwhelming. Put simply, it really sucks. Maybe you aren't sure if your spouse or loved one has a problem—or maybe you just haven't admitted it to yourself yet. Either way, neither of you can get better until you break through the denial to accept the problem. Identifying these signs of addiction can help.

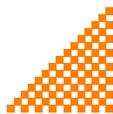


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How Do I Know If My Partner Is An Addict?



The truth is, addiction is a lot more common than most people think. A study done by American Addiction Centers found that at least 19.7 million Americans [have struggled](#) with a substance abuse disorder. But how do you know when “partying” becomes a problem?

If a substance is directly affecting someone’s life, it is a problem — whether it be through financial issues, relationship drama, or messed up responsibilities.

It can sometimes be difficult to tell if your partner does have a substance abuse problem, but it’s worth trying to figure it out. Addiction doesn’t discriminate and it will ruin your life if you let it. Getting help from a residential treatment center can change everything for both you and your partner.

If you’re ready to talk about treatment, just know that approaching a loved one about addiction is messy. For more information on the do’s and don’ts of approaching a loved one about addiction, click [here](#).

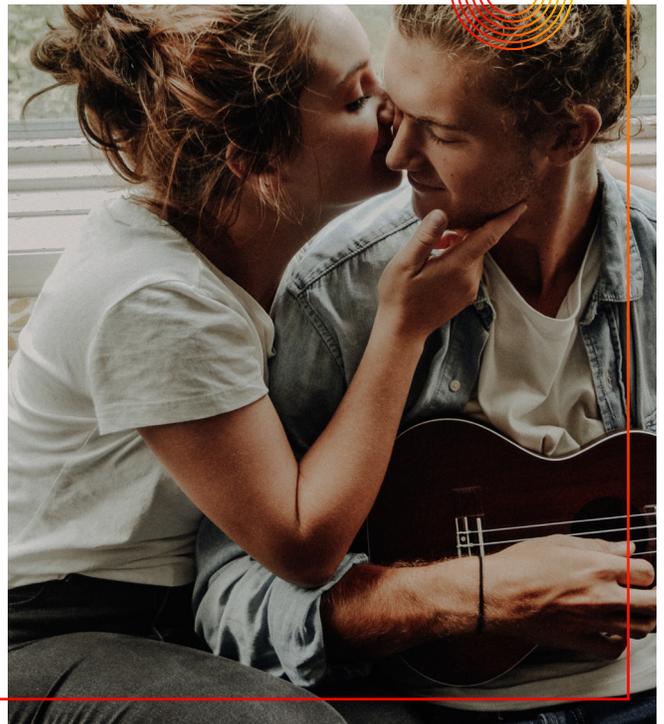
Substance abuse disorders can often go unnoticed for a long time by loved ones. As the addict’s tolerance grows, the addict becomes more and more dependent on the substance to survive. At the same time, they become more and more desperate to protect and hide their using behavior. Remember: They aren’t trying to hide their problem just because they’re shady; it’s because they care about you and don’t want to hurt you. And, they have a disease that makes them want to protect their substance abuse behaviors at all costs. So, how do you know if your partner or loved one is struggling with addiction? Here are some red flags you shouldn’t ignore.

7 Red Flags of Addiction You Shouldn't Ignore

1. IRRITABILITY

One sign you shouldn't ignore is if your loved one showing changes in behavior. Regular alcohol and drug misuse changes the chemistry of the brain, as it not only lowers one's inhibitions during use, but also affects dopamine reception. When the tolerance of drugs and alcohol increases and the body becomes dependent on the substance, time away from that substance causes withdrawal symptoms. Mood swings, irritability, and messed up behavior are all signs of substance abuse.

As always, communication is key. If you notice extreme behavior from your partner, discuss it with them in a calm, non-confrontational way. Try to understand what's really going on with your partner and offer help, instead of trying to punish them or "catch" them in the act.



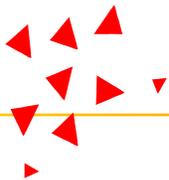
2. RISKY BEHAVIOR & LEGAL TROUBLE

If your loved one is suddenly having issues with the law, it's safe to say that there's a big problem behind it. When a loved one is an addict, one of their highest priorities will be their substance, as their body and mind will avoid withdrawals at all costs. Unfortunately, this often leads to legal trouble. They might be buying drugs illegally or even selling them. With inhibitions lowered, driving impaired could result in a DUI or assault charges. Risky or illegal behavior can be a big sign of substance abuse.

3. SECRECY & DENIAL

An unfortunate personality trait that often pairs with addiction is secrecy and denial. While an addict doesn't want to hurt or burden their loved ones, they will often keep their substance use a secret. You may find stashes of alcohol or drugs around the house. Secrecy is a big red flag because if it wasn't a problem, then they wouldn't need to hide it.

If their behavior is discovered, be prepared for some epic denial. Your spouse is probably full of excuses for why they drank so much last night, or why they couldn't make it to an event they'd promised to attend. It's possible that you have even found yourself making excuses for your partner, avoiding questions about why they haven't been around lately or why friends can't come over. If this rings true, the first thing you need to do is to admit to yourself that something's going on. Then, have an honest discussion with your loved one about the problem.



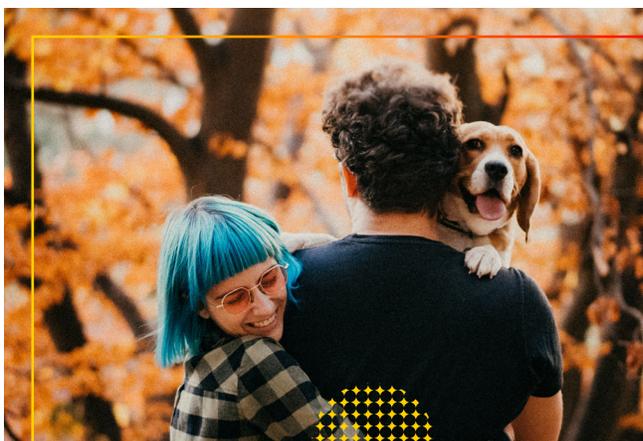
4. RELATIONSHIP ISSUES

Relationship issues are a major red flag — whether it be with your partner, parents, friends, or coworkers. It's no big mystery as to why. Drugs and alcohol make people mouth off, flake out, and generally just act like a bad friend, relative, and partner. Addicts generally do things high or drunk that they never would have done when sober. Even if you know the addiction is to blame, it still hurts when you're at the receiving end of an addict's bad behavior. Of course, there are plenty of shady people out there who aren't addicts, but if your partner's suddenly turned into Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, think about whether drugs and alcohol could be behind it.

5. FINANCIAL ISSUES

Drugs and alcohol are expensive. That's why financial issues can be a blazing red flag indicating substance abuse. Maybe you've noticed that your joint bank account is running dry, or your partner keeps asking to borrow cash. Be prepared: As their tolerance for a substance increases, they're going to need more and more of that substance — which means more money.

Remember that addiction doesn't only include drugs and alcohol. There are many behavioral addictions that could be messing up your partner's life and credit. A gambling addiction, for example, will definitely take a toll on finances. Any addiction — to a substance or a behavior — needs professional help.



6. FLAKY BEHAVIOR

Addiction makes sticking to a normal routine really difficult, which means an addict or alcoholic will often skip out on their responsibilities. They could be calling in sick to work after another rough night. They might sleep through planned events with your kids. They might forget to pay the bills. If you notice your spouse is consistently not showing up for their responsibilities, it may be a result of substance abuse.

7. APATHY

Is your partner a workout fiend who suddenly can't be bothered to lace up their sneakers? Or maybe they love to cook, but the fridge is full of rotting veggies. Substance abuse heightens anxiety and can enhance depression due to its chemical effects on the brain. That depression can cause depleted energy and a loss of interest in activities they used to love.

This is also why it is important that you find your partner a dual-diagnosis treatment program. At Transformations Care, we help treat the substance as well as the underlying mental health issues that are fueling the need to use. Dual-diagnosis treatment will help get your partner sober, while also preparing them for a better life without drugs, alcohol, and mental problems.

What Do I Do Now?

If your partner is showing only one or two of these red flags, it doesn't necessarily mean they have an addiction. The best way to find out is to have an open and honest conversation with them. If your spouse is showing many or all of these signs, though, there's a good chance they need help with addiction. Finding a residential treatment program could save their life.

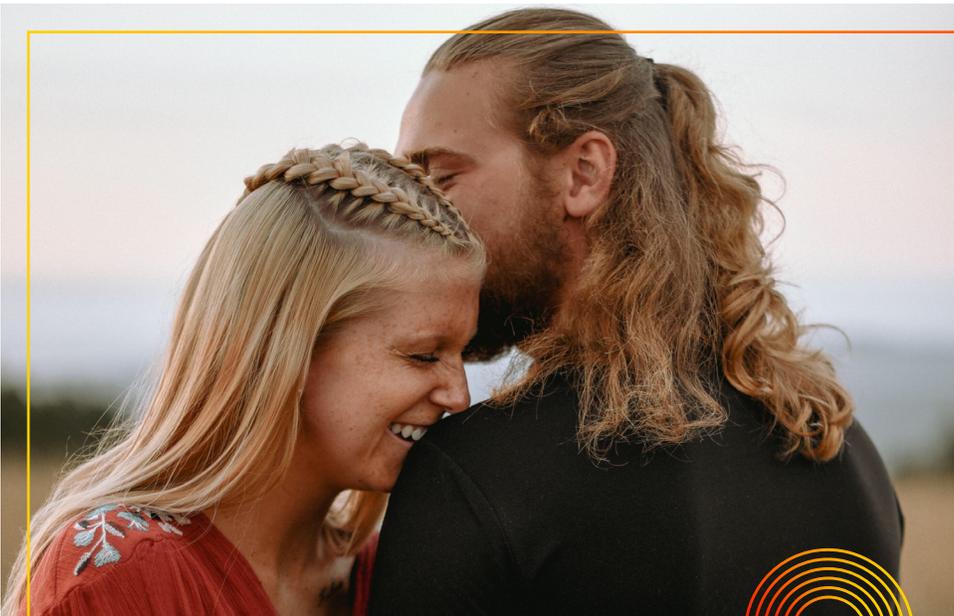
Remember: Don't blame yourself if you've been missing the signs while your partner spirals out of control. You need to be kind to yourself — and to your partner. Addiction is a tricky disease and it hurts everyone it touches. For more information on what you should do for yourself when dealing with an addicted spouse, click [here](#).

Addiction can be overcome, however — as long as you have the right help.



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If you believe your spouse or partner is struggling with an addiction, reach out to us today. There's no better time than now for you and your partner to start living a better life.



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